A Decade in Media History 1983-1992

Fred/Alan INC.

Annotated & Illustrated

MTV: Music Television
Nickelodeon
Mosaic Records
Nick-at-Nite
Comedy Central
A Current Affair
Myers's Rum Video Network
Sassy Magazine
HA! TV Comedy Network
HBO/Cinemax
James Brown/Afrika Bambaata
Swatch
More...

By Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert

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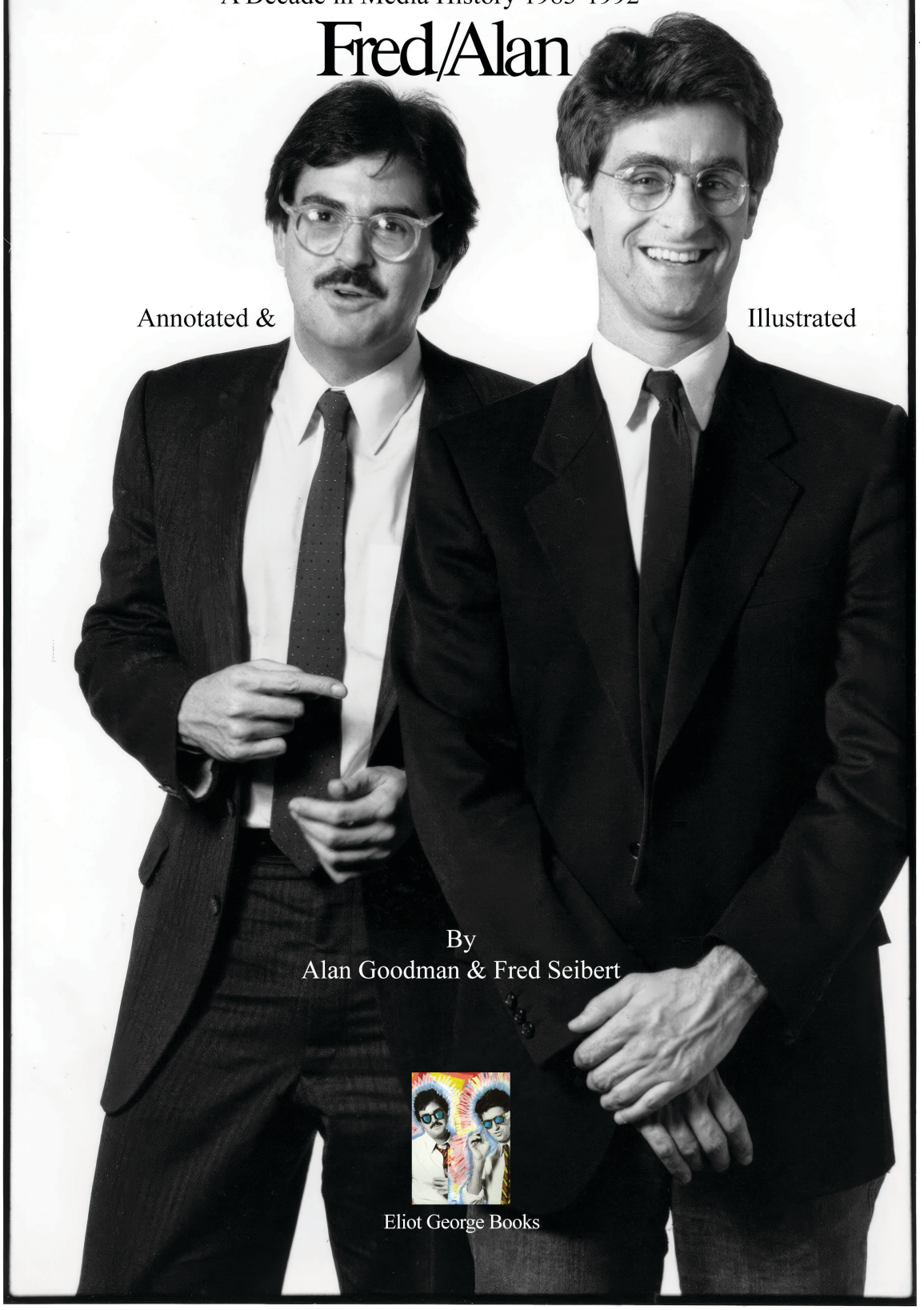

By
Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert

Eliot George Books

A Decade in Media History 1983-1992

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First edition
by Eliot George Books
March 2025

Title page photograph by Elena Seibert

Dedicated with love to
Jack and Lily and Joe and Perry

Very few of the good things in life happen
without help and collaboration,
and that was certainly true at Fred/Alan.

To the dozens –hundreds– of our
subversives, misfits and thrillmakers,
this book is dedicated to you and all
your talents, skills, and mostly,
your good cheer.

You can watch a lot of
the video and audio
(and then some)
described in this book at

www.FredAlan.org

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Photograph by Elena Seibert

The Fred/Alan Chronology

We were in business for less than 10 years but packed a lot of fun, money, and innovation into our time. Not to mention, best of all, a small city's worth of fantastic colleagues and collaborators.

. . . . .

• 1983
Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert open America's first media branding agency, with production and consulting capabilities, in New York City.

• 1988
Expanded our staff to become America's first advertising agency focused on people under 35. Nominations and wins of every creative advertising award.

• 1989
Fred/Alan opens Chauncey Street Productions with producer Albie Hecht.

• 1992
Fred/Alan Closes.

Photography by Elena Seibert

Hand coloring by Candy Kugel

INTRODUCTION

by Alan Goodman

Photograph by Elena Seibert 1984

August 1970. I arrived at Columbia University as an experienced newspaper reporter and joined the college paper staff, getting my first assignment almost immediately. I was disillusioned just as quickly when I saw my article in print with virtually every word rewritten. That had never happened to me in two summers of working at my award-winning hometown paper.

Maybe radio, I thought. I rang the bell at WKCR-FM, and Fred Seibert answered the door. He's been opening doors for me ever since.

I've been telling that story for years. It's shown up in print a time or two. Recently I admitted to Fred I'm not entirely certain it's accurate. It happened more than 50 years ago. It might have been Lou Venech, who was at the station every minute he wasn't in a classroom, keeping a pot of coffee hot next to the porcelain frog "piggy bank" where you were supposed to drop a quarter-per-cup. When I say it may not be true, I mean the first part. The second part, where opportunity after opportunity became available to me in my career and life, that was all Fred for sure.

I know this book is about our company, Fred/Alan. But my relationship with Fred is deeper and longer than that and so much of who we were as a company was rooted in who and what Fred is as a human. Like anyone, I struggle to put into words how Fred's massive intelligence, superior instinct, personal charisma, consistent point of view, and powers of persuasion were like an iceboat through a frozen corporate sea of immobility, copycat decision-making, blaming and shaming, and general inaction. It was amazing to see in person as co-workers, rivals, clients, and supervisors fell into line as Fred led any charge.

Those traits were on display early. I remember a time at the radio station when we were in the midst of one of our trademark marathons celebrating a musician's birthday. This one happened to be a three-day event honoring Charles Mingus. At some point around mid-way through the special we started playing Mingus' music chronologically. I believe it had been scheduled. When it was Fred's turn to take the mic, he said "I thought we'd take a break from playing Mingus' music chronologically and for the next few hours focus on the music that made us all fall in love with him as a bass player and composer." He programmed his own three-hour shift. I stood there thinking, any one of us could have done that. Who cares about the schedule? It was college radio. Aren't you supposed to be a renegade? But none of us was, only Fred.

(People always said that at Fred/Alan we broke all the rules. Not true. We obeyed lots of rules. We only broke the stupid ones.)

After school we went off into the

world, Fred into radio and I into film school, then advertising at CBS Records. We were in touch all the time. For a while I would call his new station in L.A., ask for Fred Seibert, and be corrected by the receptionist. "Sei-BERG," she would tell me as she quickly put me on hold before I could tell her I actually knew the guy.

In radio he became a protégé of Dale Pon, who in a few years Fred would hire as the advertising agency for MTV. Dale taught Fred, and later me, things like the inextricable link between media and creative, the value of numbers, the importance of making and backing up a claim, and how to build audiences. In following Dale, Fred wound up back to New York, where he was able to resume his side hustle in freelance record production. He was doing a date in the city once and called me to come sit with him in the control room. He had just had an offer from Bob Pittman, head of The Movie Channel, one of the new premium subscription channels springing up to take on HBO. Bob had gotten a recommendation from Dale for Fred to run promotion for the network (Bob and Dale knew each other from their days at NBC Radio). Fred was struggling with the decision. I looked at the musicians on the other side of the glass. One or two of them were drunk, I think there was an argument in progress, no one was sure what was happening, and it was unclear that anything worthwhile was going to get recorded that evening. "Do it," I told him.

It wasn't long before I was by his side producing animation for the network and within days, working with him to plan MTV.

One of Fred's great innovations in on-air promotion was bringing The Movie Channel subscribers to New York for two days of sightseeing, dining, and promo recording. He believed in the value of unscripted opinions from real people, a strategy we later employed at Nickelodeon with real kids. One commercial for The Movie Channel has stayed with me all these years. "There are only three things in my town that are 24 hours," the man told our camera. "The hospital, the diner, and The Movie Channel." I've never written anything that good.

"24 hours a day" was an example of a promotable promise for The Movie Channel that we also used for MTV, in an era when it was typical for us to develop a list of five or six promises for the networks we were promoting.

Again, Fred's idea, borne out of his radio experience where the DJs had a set of "liners" they'd use in breaks to call out the station's attributes.

Anyone who ever worked with us knows about our affection for promises. We objected to slogans – slogans wear out and get replaced. Also, we insisted on devoting a LOT of time to promotion, which would have hastened that burn-out. With the

right promises, you could execute endlessly and never run out of ways to creatively tell each story. I could probably rattle off all the promises, to this day. It's a system that wouldn't work in today's era where everything is streamed, content is king, and brands are less valued. But for years I would run into generations of promo producers who learned from Fred and me, and would tell me about their promises, long after that strategy ceased being useful.

Another of our innovations was producing TV "audio first." As MTV began building its staff and Fred started hiring producers, he found he couldn't afford seasoned pros and none existed in TV who understood music the way we did. We had spent years doing segues and mixes and montages in college radio. Sound, we believed, mattered more than picture. If something doesn't sound right, it's grating as hell. If a second-long image isn't right, what difference does it make? People are barely watching anyway. So we worked with newbies and sent them all to Clack Studios, a recording studio where I had worked in the music business, owned by the best audio engineer in New York. Audio studio time was $50 an hour. Video hours at video studios were $300 an hour, before they started adding all the extras like special effects processors, title generators, and dubs. Better to have novices crapping around at a lower rate than what the video joints charged. Like many things with Fred, there was a practical reason, but the aesthetic reason was there as well.

Later, as we built Fred/Alan, I was often in a position where young staff members were asking me to interpret Fred for them. "I brought him an ad to see," they'd tell me, "and he wrote a note on it, but I don't really know what he wants."

I would try to explain Fred to them. "Look, Fred is at heart a jazz musician," I'd tell them. "You brought him something, and based on what you showed him he started improvising. He started riffing. I guess he wants to see something different, because if he were in love with what you showed him he would have told you. But don't worry too much about what he told you. It was just a riff. He doesn't necessarily want to see that exact thing, and probably won't even remember it. He wants you to think. He wants something that works. Go away and do some more work. Don't bring him one idea, because I can tell you he doesn't want to see one idea. Don't come back and tell him his idea doesn't work either. But if you come back and show him, 'I tried this direction, and then I tried this, and then I tried this third one, and then I thought about this, and this seemed like the best way for us to go,' he may still not like what you have but he will totally respect your process of development and believe you did what he wants you to do."

Other times I'd tell them, "Yeah, I can't read his writing either."

While we could often finish each other's sentences, we weren't the same person.

An important thing to say about Fred is how he is the world's greatest champion of great ideas. A myth abounds that he only likes his own stuff. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have never seen anyone discard his own work faster in favor of someone else's when it was clear the other person had a better idea. It was a great lesson to me. There can be great satisfaction in recognizing the contributions of others.

I think of all the things we did at Fred/Alan I am most pleased about the careers we launched. Not the work. The work was great. I still have some of it hanging on the wall because I love looking at it. But nothing matches the joy I feel knowing I pulled people out of the team to tell them, "You're a writer. You don't know it yet, but you're a writer." And now those people are writers. Or the junior art director who was supposed to accompany me to a shoot I was directing who I told at the last moment, "I'm not going. You're directing." It was his first of many. He just needed the push. Fred/Alan was a wonderful nest, but how thrilling when we could push someone out of the comfort and safety into the wider world.

At Fred/Alan we filled extra offices with colleagues who needed space because we wanted those brains around us. I once hired a comedy writer to write ads for us because he made me laugh. (Later he hired me to run his sitcom.) We made account executives out of people who had never been account executives before. We boosted voiceover artists into being producers. We convinced East Village artists to do advertising for MTV, getting them to take commercial work for the first time in their lives because we promised them they could do whatever they wanted – we wouldn't change a line in their drawings. (R. Crumb, the legendary underground comic book artist, did a full-page ad for MTV that was basically about how much he hated MTV. It's a brilliant drawing.)

In today's corporate world HR departments write job descriptions, then go looking for people who fit those descriptions. It's an impossible assignment, because no one will ever match your dream applicant. Our attitude was, let's surround ourselves with smart people we like being with, and we'll figure out what they're good at. Our business cards never had titles on them. That wasn't the part we cared about. Instead, we gave people shots and we were loyal. I still work with suppliers who were Fred/Alan people 40 years ago.

It was also a great place for personal experimentation, craft building, and innovating. I would never have gotten the breaks I got without Fred's cheerleading for me. When we were younger, he hired me to write liner notes for his records. He hired me

to produce animation at The Movie Channel when all I had done to earn the job was attend one class in animation at film school before dropping the class. It's not common for advertising agency vice presidents to direct commercials, but I loved doing it and Fred was absolutely determined that I should do things that I loved, so I was often our director. When Nickelodeon was getting ready to produce its first sitcom, he told them the reason the pilot to "Hey Dude" sucked was that they needed a story editor like Alan to supervise the writing. I had never done that job before. But I wrote a new pilot and we went on to do five seasons and suddenly my career as a writer/producer was launched.

Our Fred/Alan people were wonderful. But let me say this about the work. The work was frikken unbelievable. We did more work, and more great work, than seems possible to me now. Part of that comes from the fact that Fred and I love to work. A guy who was a big-deal consultant to MTV pointed this out to me early in our agency's life. He had sold his direct mail company to American Express and didn't have to do anything anymore. "I've never seen anything like you guys before," he told me. "You really seem to still love doing the work."

I don't know about Fred, but I don't think I'll ever retire. What would I do? Neither one of us plays golf. We don't really have any interests. We're not great at small talk. Travel is okay, but it's sort of an exhausting pain in the butt. What's more fun than working, and talking about work?

We'll always be checking up with each other, too, if only to take each other's temperature on some issue or another. I can usually count on him to fill in gaps in my memory or fact base. In 50 years I've never heard Fred express an opinion that wasn't apparently well-reasoned, deeply considered, poked and prodded for holes and flaws, and ultimately decided in a way that would allow him to have a ready answer if called upon to respond to a question on that subject. I say "apparently" because no one could possibly have that many opinions all sorted and filed away. He has to be making it up as he goes, but always in a manner that makes you believe you're not the first person to ask.

I can't imagine what my life would have been if I hadn't met Fred Seibert more than 50 years ago and fallen under his spell of creativity, inspiration, and delight in making things. I still measure a lot of what I decide based on "what would Fred do."

So much of the joy I've experienced in life I really owe to Fred's moral, courageous, generous, and spirited example. I love him more than I could ever say.

Or maybe I owe it all to Lou Venech. I guess we'll never really know.

Fred/Alan was a hoot. Great colleagues and special, creative work. Great clients too. Until they weren't.

Who we were –and are– was set at our first meeting at WKCR-FM, the college radio station at Columbia University in New York. We became fast friends, learning about all sorts of music and audio production. We went on to work together in various places on various projects. We became brothers-in-law and uncles to our kids. And, we kept on working together, whether we were employed or not. We got each other jobs, and the more professional we became the deeper our affection. Friendship, understanding and some work here and there has continued for more than 50 years.

But, the most intense professional period was the 10+ years we had at MTV and Fred/Alan.

I really wanted to be in the record business. In our generation, pop music was the thing and records were the force multiplier. Being in rock bands throughout high school and college was great, but over time I found myself wanting to help get music out there. Based in New York City, it should have been easy, but my biggest success was getting some of my friends gigs at the world class Columbia Records. Alan worked there, and try as he might, as he once said, "Fred didn't get hired in every department at CBS Records," Columbia's parent company. But I found my way into commercial radio, then became one of the early employees in the new technology of the time, cable television, at the company that was to become MTV Networks.

In a short while, Alan joined me, and together we hooked up with my childhood friend, artist Frank Olinsky, and he and his partners designed the innovative MTV logo for us. Alan and I produced the video that introduced music television to the cable industry. Frank led the charge into the unique logos with which we surprised the world –we tried to use animation to keep up with the graphic revolution of rock and jazz album covers– and I put together the video promotion group. It's fair to say that our work is what's most remembered about MTV.

Having spent my childhood working at my parents' Mom and Pop pharmacy, I was an anxious, and ultimately, unhappy employee. It must have been a shock to Alan that, after all the accolades and promotions our MTV work brought us, I marched into his office one day after a confrontation in the executive suite and announced that "we" were quitting. The two of us had already joked, when we were disgusted with the mediocre work of one the MTV ad agencies, that it would be fun to have a company called Fred/Alan, because none of our young friends

INTRODUCTION
by Fred Seibert

would have a clue about America's most popular radio comedian, Fred Allen. Maybe the oldsters who controlled budgets would hire us?

It took a year to figure out what we were going to do. We found our office through the friendship of Buzz Potamkin, a leading MTV animation producer, in Jackie Gleason's former "Honeymooners" production headquarters at the top of the Park Central Hotel on 7th Avenue. We'd left with thoughts of making TV shows. (It took us a few years, but we eventually got there.) MTV networks hired us right back as their major creative consultants.

For years, I've said that we were the first company to codify media "branding," an easy enough translation from the radio business we'd both been in, along with boss Bob Pittman. But really, no one else did it, at least to the degree that we were up to. Alan and I were the first people in television to execute on the notion that a "brand" could be applied to media rather than only boxed consumer products. (And of course, that virus has spread far and wide to apply to individuals and politicians wondering about their personal "brand".) Along with the rest of my MTV

Photograph by Elena Seibert 1984

Program Services team we'd succeeded with it beyond anyone's wildest dreams, and when we left that led to the company suggesting that Fred/Alan might be able to fix what was ailing Nickelodeon.

Forty years later it's hard to imagine, but in the early '80s, the all-kids-all-the-time TV channel was the first of its kind, and they were failing at execution. No one watched. Nickelodeon was the lowest rated cable channel in America.

We went to work, I even moved into their offices, and with the then-unheard of "brand" strategy, we helped the Nick employees understand that they were the leaders of a club of millions of kids who were hungry for a television channel that understood them. Our clients knew a lot about kids, we knew a little bit about how to use TV to talk to them, and within six months they'd gone from worst to first in the ratings, where they stayed for 25 years, following the path we'd cleared for them. Soon, cable channels across the country wanted a piece of what we had. Longtime, lucrative gigs for Showtime, Lifetime, HBO and The Movie Channel followed. We even helped some of our friends who were leading the world revolution in jazz record reissues. It was a heady time.

And after launching the company with a short lived series for The Playboy Channel, it took us four years, and the addition of our college buddy Albie Hecht to our band of misfits, to restart our TV show ambitions, spinning off Chauncey Street Productions (the street in Bensonhurst that Jackie Gleason "lived" as Ralph Kramden in The Honeymooners. Natch!) with Albie, Alan and me producing. A few music videos led to a Gilbert Gottfried comedy special for HBO's Cinemax. Our friends at Nickelodeon liked our idea for a "Kid's Court" series, MTV thought our quiz show might just work (it didn't), and HA! (the Comedy Central predecessor) gave the greenlight to a set of half hour specials featuring several up and coming performance artists. We even did our one and only network TV comedy pilot for CBS.

Let's be real, Alan and I had no idea what we were doing. We were both DIY before DIY was a thing. Maybe Alan got a little guidance in the advertising department at CBS Records. I'd read an advertising memoir (which, ironically, made me sure to stay away from ad agencies) and got some basic training from my mentor Dale Pon when we worked together in country music radio. But, of course, our lack of training made sure our solutions to problems were based on our personal experiences with media rather than the tried, true and cookie cutter. And, not for nothing, it caused us to hire co-workers who had no "experience" either, other than street smarts, and

often, their skills.

Over time, things started to go a little sideways. The stress of supporting 50 employees and their families melded into our scrappy clients becoming responsible corporate executives, searching for financial growth rather than creative escalation. To this day, I don't think Alan and I ever had a disagreement. That is, until our Fred/Alan underlings would start to argue and we both felt the need to defend whomever we were responsible for. After a while, it all got to be too much and we each decided that making money couldn't be what it was all about.

Like I said, Fred/Alan was a hoot. I can only speak for myself, but I'm sure Alan would agree, we never really looked at our colleagues and creative partners around the world as "employees," just other friends with whom we could get into good trouble, trying to change the world. We took our work seriously, but never ourselves. We'd try anything, and if one thing didn't work we were positive the next thing would.

Most of all, it was the special chemistry that Alan and I have always had. A lack of creative fear was constantly fueled by the excitement of giving new talent a chance to leap up to world class. We were sure that if we came to work to have some fun, make some money, and be surrounded by people we liked, it would result in something special. And, sure enough, something extraordinary happened day after day, month after month, year after year.

The two of us share a vision that has stayed remarkably in sync for 50 years. The decade we worked side by side was exceptional. The decades since have been deep. Deep friendship, deep respect, deep love.

Thanks buddy. You've made a life worthwhile.

TWENTY CENTS
APRIL 7, 1947
TIME
THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE
Ernest Hamlin Baker
FRED ALLEN
"This drudgery, this sham, this gold mine."
(Radio)
$6.50 A YEAR
(REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.)
VOL. XLIX NO. 14

Fred Allen,
our patron saint:

"You know, television is called
a new medium, and I have
discovered why they call it
a Medium – because nothing
is Well Done."

"This drudgery,
this sham,
this gold mine."

"An advertising agency
is 85 percent confusion
and 15 percent commission."

Fred/Alan business cards designed by George Lois 1983

Fred/Alan's first reception desk, and one of our beautiful rugs.
870 7th Avenue, Manhattan, New York. 1983-1987

MTV:

The first MTV promotional bumper sticker August 1981

Fred Seibert & Alan Goodman :
MTV employees 1980 -1983
Fred/Alan 1983 -1992

MUSIC TELEVISION

1980-1992

Fred/Alan was a viable business because of the promotional vocabulary, graphic design and animation we'd developed while employees at MTV: Music Television.

During the summer of 1980, we commissioned (without even setting a budget) logo development from Manhattan Design, a new firm sitting in a tiny workroom behind a tai chi studio in lower Manhattan. Months later Fred had hired a small staff as the Program Services department to figure out what the hell was TV promotion on a channel with no shows. Elias/Peterson Associates started composing music for our animations and Alan commandeered independent film studios Broadcast Arts, Buzzco and Colossal Pictures to animate what was to become our iconic 'M.'

The magic carpet ride we were on continued beautifully when we left our jobs and launched Fred/Alan on April 11, 1983.

I'm a Cable Brat
MUSIC TELEVISION
Happy Birthday
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION™

Fred Seibert
Marcy Brafman
Marc Chusid
Jay Dorfman
Alan Goodman
Richard Schenkman

MTV
:MUSIC TELEVISION
PROGRAM SERVICES

[the in-house creative and promotion department 1980-1983]

Fred: On May 5, 1980 I lucked into my first job in television –cable television– at Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment Company (WASEC). Within 30 days programming head Bob Pittman started putting together the team to launch 'The Music Channel' (the working name for what eventually became MTV) and had me add to my existing duties as the head of promotion for The Movie Channel. Later on, I was included in a group known as MTV's co-founders. Alan came along within a year, at first, to start the process of developing an actual vocabulary for the channel –probably the unsung key to any branding effort– to produce the dozens of 10-second MTV network animations that defined the channel's unique personality.

We had an incredible gang –Marcy Brafman, Marc Chusid, Jay Dorfman and Richard Schenkman– who executed all our sui generis network videos. Against all odds, the unique logo, network IDs, and promos set the look and sound for progressive media over the next 20 years. Eventually, my departments included promotion, studio production, programming, advertising, and creative services.

By 1983 the entrepreneurial genes were straining, so my great longtime friend, creative partner, writer/producer Alan Goodman, and I left the company to form the world's first media branding/production/advertising agency.

Our first client? MTV Networks, until 1992.

MANHATTAN DESIGN

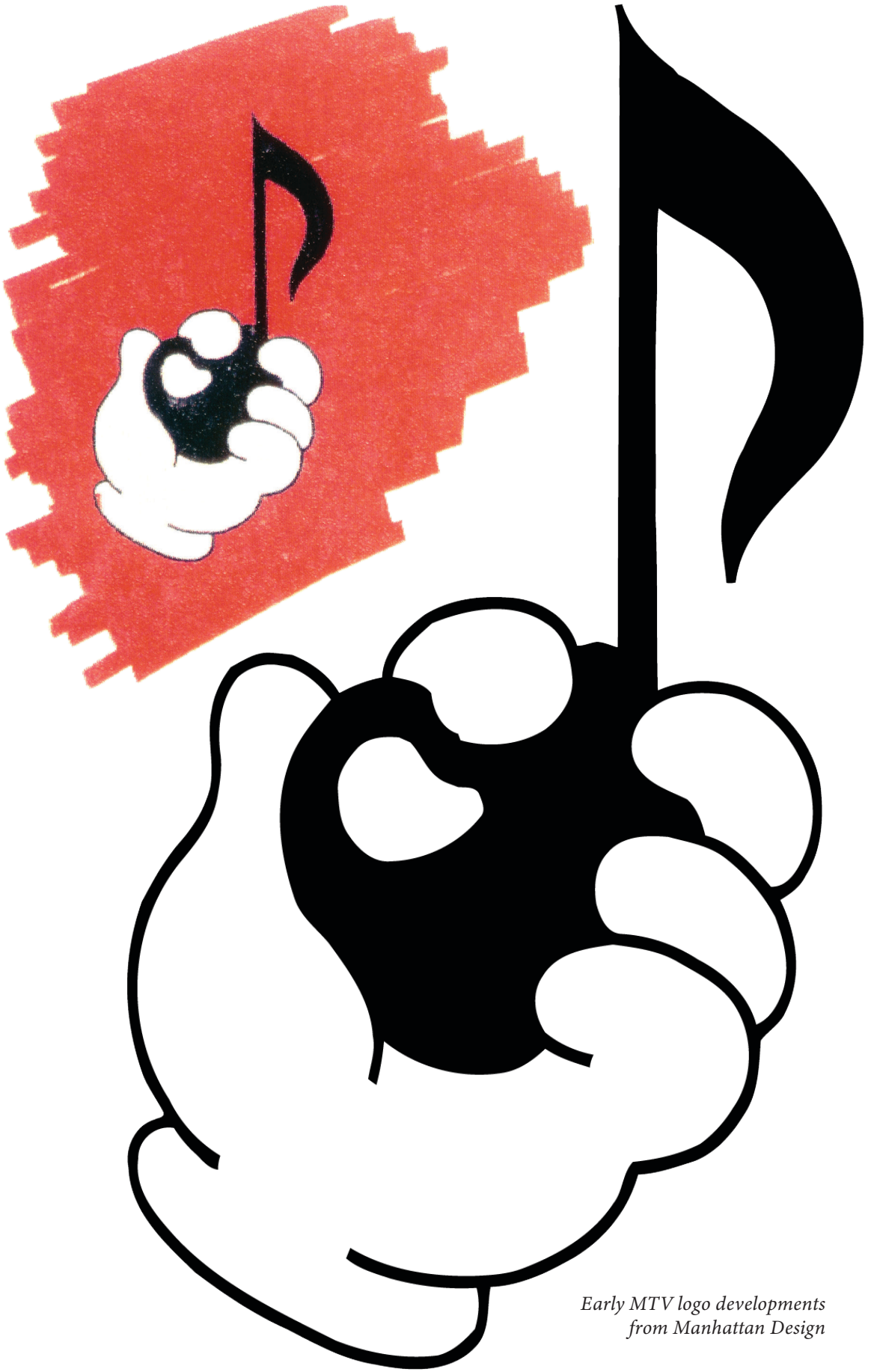
Pat Gorman
Frank Olinsky
Patti Rogoff

Fred: I'd been friends with Frank Olinsky since I was four years old and knew Frank as a talented artist and a life-long music fanatic. In mid-1980, working in television for the first time, I got the assignment to develop the logo for what was then called "The Music Channel," a 24 hour pop music video network on cable TV, and I was sure Frank could handle it.

Alan and I went down to the studio Frank had started with Pat Gorman and Patti Rogoff that was in the spare room of a *tai chi* studio above Bigelow Chemists in Greenwich Village and started a yearlong exercise of try/fails of over 500 designs. You wouldn't have known how hard we were pushing this new studio, and they kept up with the same enthusiasm throughout the process. Several months in, our boss settled on the name MTV: Music Television. We asked Manhattan Design to incorporate it into the "Mickey Mouse" hand, squeezing a note, before we realized we had to go back to the drawing board.

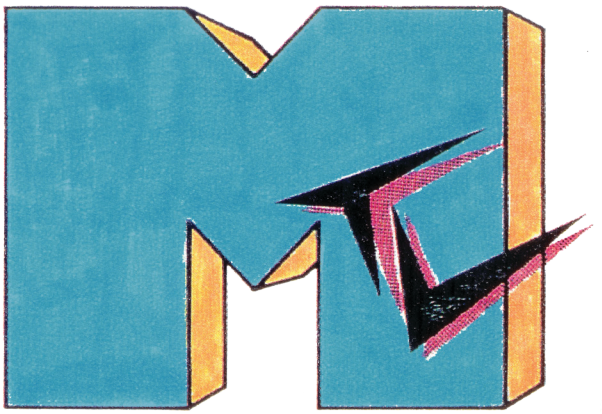
MTV was three months away from launch when the group came over to our offices with a pile of new ideas. We rejected them all until we got to a wrinkled piece of tracing paper on the bottom that contained a giant 'M.'

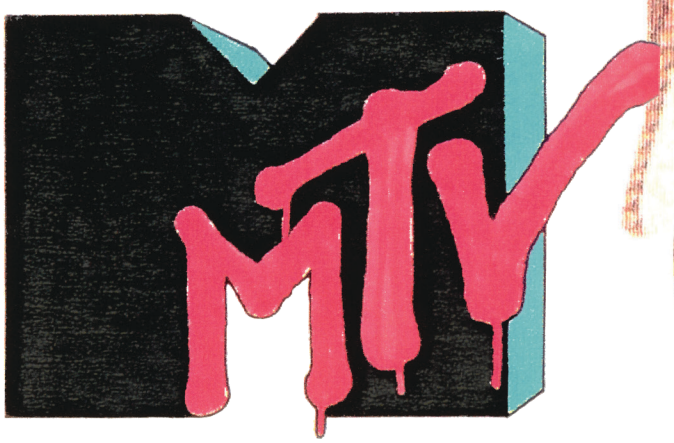
Yes! A flurry of activity followed to finalize everything but the "final" colors, because, you know, a logo has to have a final version. It took a few weeks and a dozen iterations before we realized –to our trademark lawyers' chagrin–that there was no "final." We could use what would eventually become thousands of different variations.



Early MTV logo developments
from Manhattan Design

Early MTV logo developments from
Manhattan Design 1980-1981:
The cartoon hand holding the music note was
appealing for a few minutes, but not so much
with the addition of the 'MTV' name.





Frank Olinsky originally spray painted the "TV" part of the logo to get a graffiti look that was so prevalent in the late 20th century in New York City.

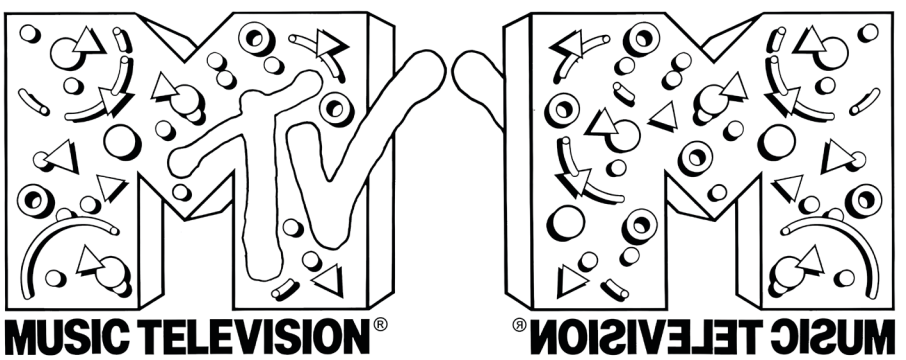
We liked seeing rock stars like Cheap Trick's Rick Neilsen interacting with this version of the logo, but less so when we finally changed the name of "The Music Channel" to MTV

MUSIC
TELE
VISION™

MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION™

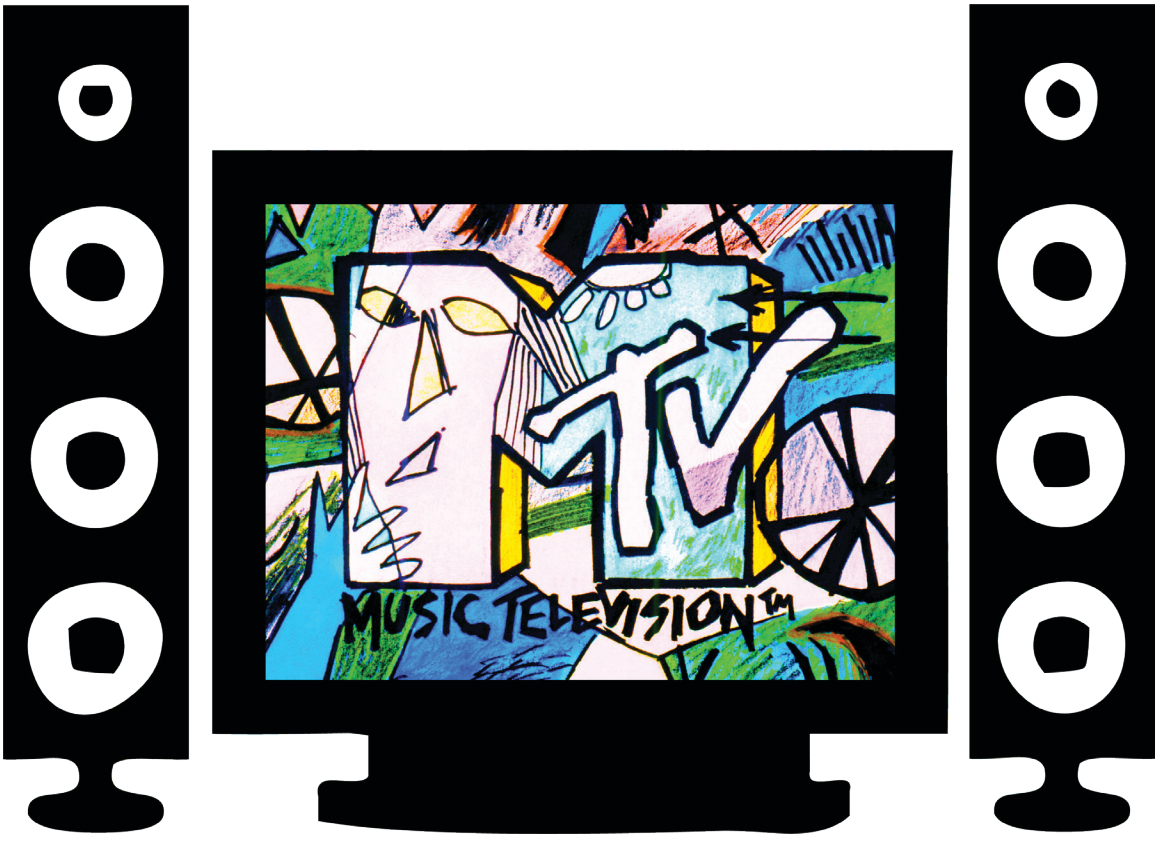
We had a few, last minute tussles with Warner Amex upper management. The sales department was embarrassed by what they thought was a stupid looking logo. They were afraid that national advertisers wouldn't take us seriously enough to give us their money. The legal department was concerned that all the hundreds of different design executions meant that we couldn't trademark it.

MUSIC TELEVISION


MUSIC TELEVISION®
MUSIC TELEVISION®

The MTV logos from Manhattan Design fit the 1980s TV screens perfectly.

Logo illustration by [Colossal], San Francisco



Some design guidance from one of Fred's mentors was "dominate the space."

Logo illustration by [Colossal], San Francisco

"HEY YOU!

DON'T WATCH THAT!"

Newsreel footage from the United States Library of Congress

Voice over from MADNESS: "One Step Beyond"

The talented, inexperienced creative promo group of Marcy, Richard, Jay and Marc experimented for months to find the right approach to talk to our audience. We had a TV channel whose "shows" were all three minutes long and never pre-scheduled, so all we could promote was what we were and how great it was going to be. We eventually brainstormed seven or eight "marketing propositions" that promised, among other things, we were on 24 hours a day in stereo (both revolutionary in the early '80s.) After the team traveled to the Library of Congress to take advantage of the free access to their video archives and came back with dozens of old black and white newsreels, Richard Schenkman got the bright idea to match some ballroom dancing with the English band Madness and we had our first 30 seconds of "your favorite music."

WATCH THIS!!!"

TALKING HEADS:
"Once in a Lifetime"

FLEETWOOD MAC:
"The Chain"

SHOES
"Too Late"

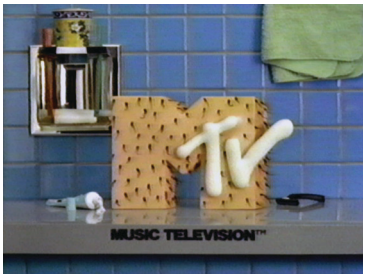
MTV PLAYS YOUR FAVORITE MUSIC. MTV: MUSIC TELEVISION

Written by Richard Schenkman

Our proposition to filmmakers...

By mid-1981 we'd (finally!) gotten a sign off from the higher ups on our approach to an MTV: Music Television logo design. We'd settled in on the notion that we were a video channel first and foremost, a "moving picture" network with programming –music videos– that was also constantly in flux, so the channel's "branding" shouldn't be "fixed" the way a classic logo would be executed in print. Like rock'n'roll we wanted things to be fluid, raucous and full of life. And, it should be animated.

We'd come up in a world where pop had transformed into rock, where album covers were leading graphic design into places that corporate design was scared to go. If we did our jobs well, album covers would be, not a thing of the past exactly, but yesterday's innovation. Our animated logos would be adventurous audacious, outrageous. They'd set the pace for the future of media. (Yes, everyone at MTV was that arrogant. At least, we were.)



As Fred recalled in a blog post: "A month into my gig at The Movie Channel, Bob announced The Music Channel and asked me to lead the creative efforts of the channel-to-be. He had a clear vision of a format that would be, exclusively, music videos 24 hours a day, interrupted occasionally by 'VJs,' video jockeys.

"'So,' I asked Bob, 'what else will be in the clock? Jingles, like Top 40 radio?' I hoped not, but I couldn't really picture anything else.

"'No! Are you kidding? NO!!! We'll do animated logos.' Remember, we didn't have a name, no less a logo.

"He could tell I was a little confused. 'What?'

"'Imagine this.' He was already sounding triumphant. 'There's an animated cow grazing around. All of sudden, an ax comes out of nowhere and cuts off its head! The head falls to the ground, veins spurting blood. The cow vomits! And in the vomit is our logo!!!'

"Wow, I thought. Bob will let us do whatever we want!"

There was a bit of back and forth as to what style of an-

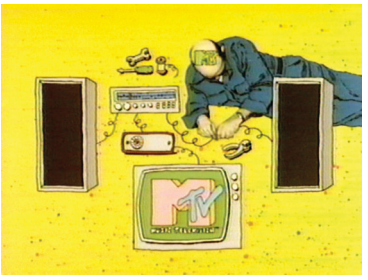
imation to use (we didn't want to pigeon hole ourselves into one approach) but we were given the green light to use our best creative judgment.

Even before the logo was agreed upon we started researching animation productions companies, something neither of us knew anything about. We scoured advertising trade magazines, asked around, and started visiting anyone who would meet with us.

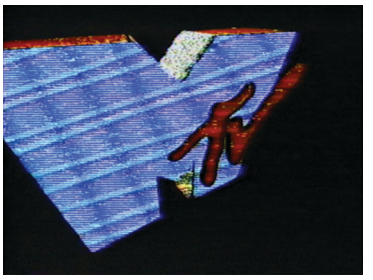
After a particularly dour meeting with the hottest producers in New York we decided that we'd only work with people who actually liked contemporary pop music, and with folks we could have a laugh with. Basically, new, indie producers who would try anything, anyhow, any way. Like us.

Our pitch?

"We're going to pay you less than you'd like, but we'll give you a lot of creative freedom. Seriously.



"Show us stuff you *love*, not what you think we want. We actually have no idea what we want, except that we want it great. Make the pieces for us that you'll put at the top of your demo reels, the very best you've got."

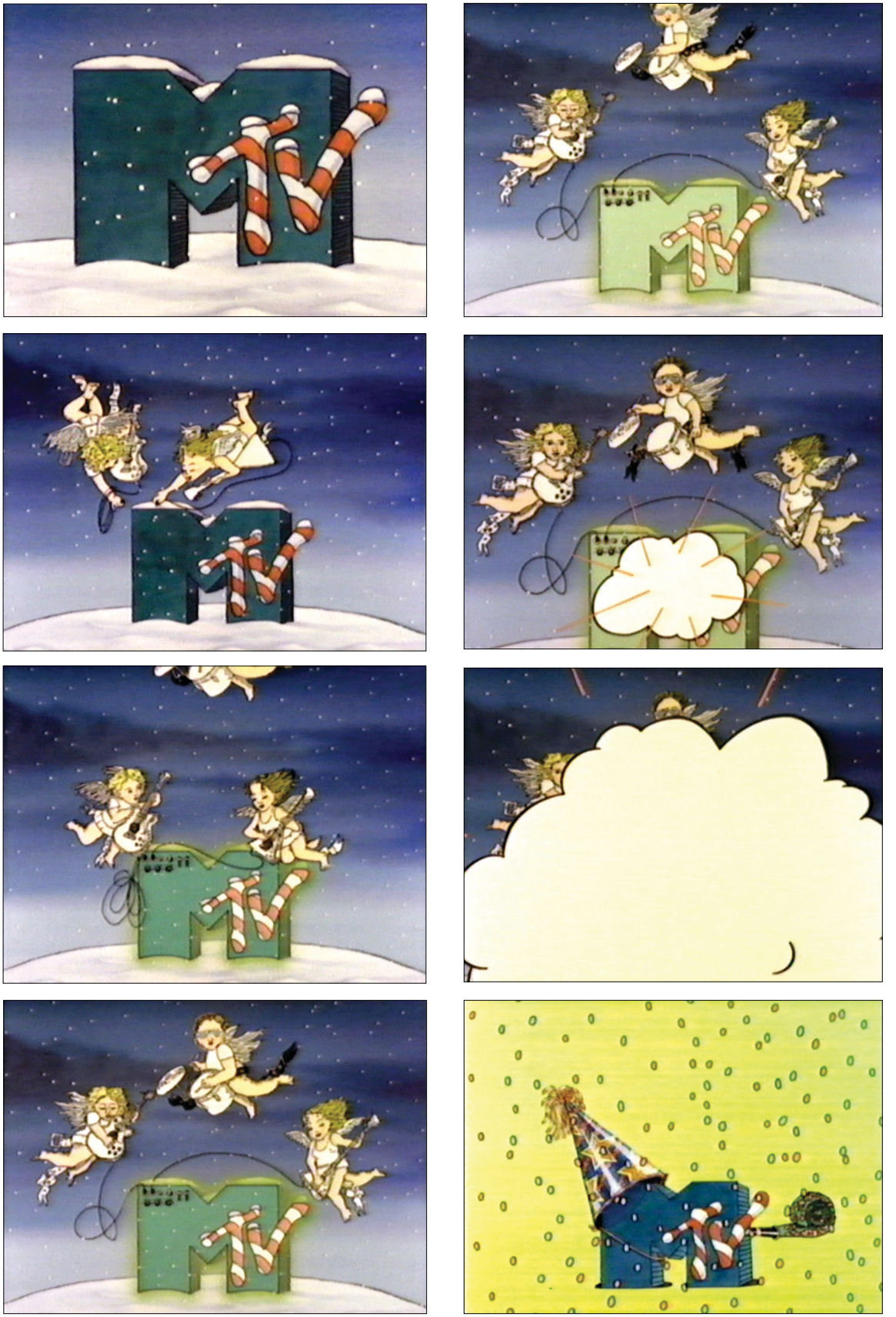


Only the young indies were dumb enough –smart enough!– to fall for that pitch. They were sick of clients that wanted to reign in their creativity, and they believed that we were sincerely interested in the most exciting possibilities of their filmmaking.

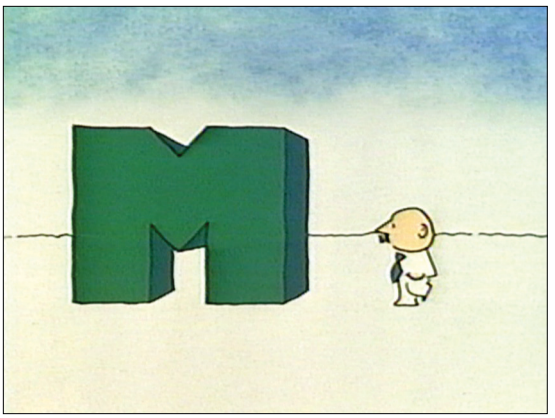
The assignment? A 10-second animated spot –we can supply music or you can produce your own soundtrack– where our logo is on the screen for at least the last three seconds. But, we'd prefer versions of the logo to be on a lot more. Oh, and we're a rock'n'roll channel, so it ought to feel like that. Whatever that means to you.

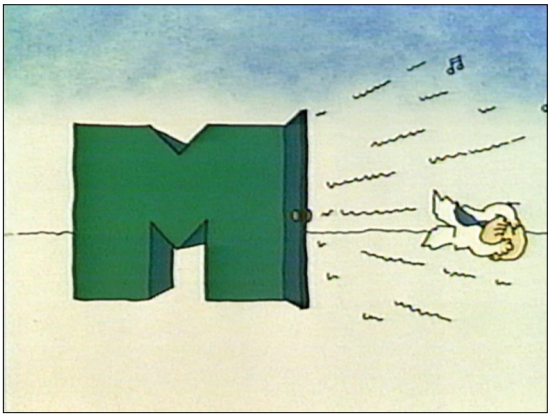
Over two years. Alan produced all our animations, and several independent filmmakers stepped up and virtually created an approach to presenting media for a new generation. The world's first generation that had grown up with television throughout their entire lives.

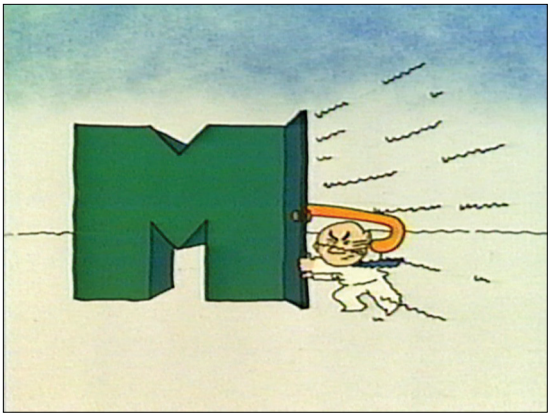
And, for the next 20 years, literally hundreds of filmmakers put their stamp on what had become a global phenomenon. MTV: Music Television!



Happy Holidays!: Manhattan Design Illustration: Frank Olinsky Animation: Buzzco, NYC







Illustrated & directed by Candy Kugel, Buzzco, NYC

Buzz Potamkin

originally had a New York City commercial production company, Buzzco (neé Perpetual Motion Pictures), whose reel was the only one of hundreds we reviewed that was memorable for its fresh approach to traditional hand drawn animation. So, when Fred's mentor suggested that we work together on MTV it was a no brainer and the studio became one of our first trusted collaborators on some of the most iconic early MTV signifiers.

BUZZNCO

Buzz Potamkin
Vincent Cafarelli
Marilyn Kraemer
Candy Kugel
David Sameth

More than 75,000 times.

Fred: The very first time the world saw the visualization of our mutating logo would lead an unsuspecting global populace to all the other cultural barbarism we were about to unleash.

There were very few "ideas" for spots I could claim as mine at MTV: Music Television. Media strategy and identifying talent were my strengths, and I felt everything else would flow from there. But this spot was different; it's the only one for which I feel complete ownership.

MTV boss Bob Pittman and I knew there had to be a signal identification at the top and bottom of each and every hour of MTV, where a VJ would identify the most important music videos in that half hour. We agreed it would be a voice over animation, with stills IDing the songs.

But, what should the animation be? It had to be memorable, repeatable, and not drive a viewer completely crazy. After all, it was going to play almost 17,000 times every year. If we did it right, my biggest goal could be achieved; I wanted the world to fall in love with our 'M.'

Oh. Since our logo didn't follow any classic design and marketing rules, upper management had dragged their feet approving it. By the time they got around to it we had less than 90 days until launch.

It seemed to me MTV had the most stuck up and conceited view of ourselves. We were completely enamored of the fact that we had no TV shows on our music television network (or put another way, we posted a new "show" every three minutes or so when a new video began). That was world changing, right? (Well, not really. CNN beat us to it by 14 months. But, they didn't "name it and claim it;" MTV did, so MTV would get the credit.)

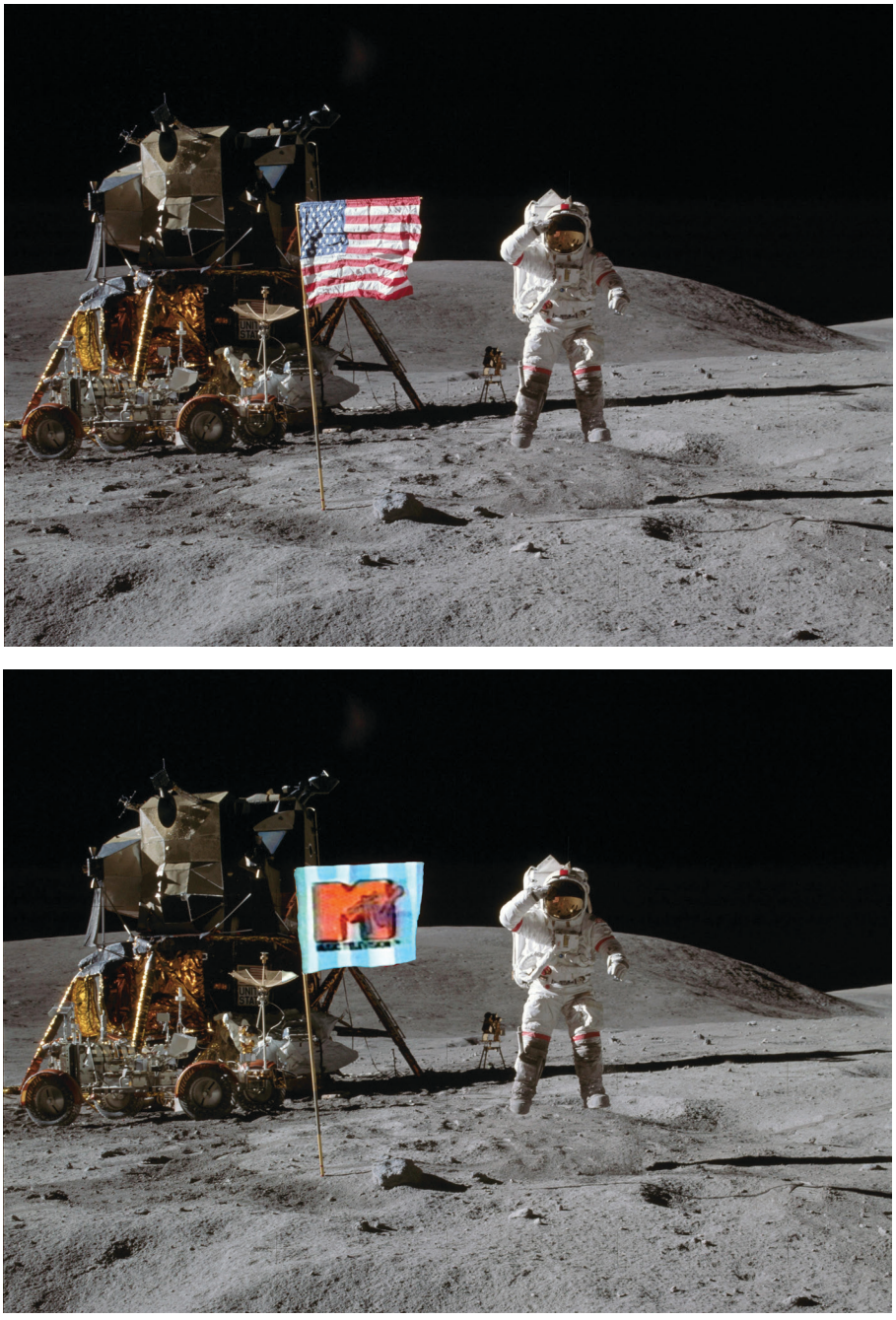
This spot was obviously going to be our most important. There would be over 30 changing video pieces every hour (music videos, promos, VJs, and commercials) and this would be the only thing all day– all week, all year– that was constant. It would get a lot of scrutiny.

I thought the "top of the hour" spot should do its practical job and reflect our arrogant self regard. And not for nothing, it needed to be inexpensive, and use our ever changing logo that Manhattan Design brought us. (At least the constant logo metamorphosis –fractions of a second for each design– would keep us fresh, distinct, and force folks to watch that 'M.')

Of course, it goes without saying that like everything we would do, it had to have that indefinable rock'n'roll attitude.

The simplest way to combine all that stuff was to steal the shine from an already existing piece of video. "Let's take the most famous television scene ever," I said, and fold, spindle, and mutilate it to our nefarious purposes.

Our brainstorming in my tiny office cubicle turned up some famous, or really infamous, stuff. We were all children of the '60s and '70s, so our immediate thought was the day in 1963 when



Top: Original NASA photograph of an Apollo moonwalk
Bottom: our 1981 MTV desecration; logo by Manhattan Design, illustration by Candy Kugel, Buzzco, New York

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everyone stayed home from school and were subjected to the live video horror of the Lee Harvey Oswald shooting by Jack Ruby. Aside from its total wrongness, it occurred to me that it was pretty much an American memory.

I mean, please. The very first claim MTV was going to make, the first "promise" we developed, was a promise we really had to own.

> "The ***world's*** first video music channel. MTV: Music Television."

MTV needed a global moment. Or maybe 75,000 of them.

As our team was bullshitting ideas it came to me. In the summer of '69 I was traveling behind the Iron Curtain with my family on the day of the Apollo 11 moonwalk. The streets of dirt poor Sofia, Bulgaria were choked with walkers looking for apartments with scarce black & white TV sets to witness this seemingly impossible achievement of man. Truly, Earth's most memorable event in television history.

My mentor Dale Pon had introduced me to the treasure trove of free images and film from NASA, a public government entity which we all "owned" as US citizens. It would be MTV's inexpensive source of public domain photographs and video. As a start-up –no one was really sure this thing would work except us– we needed all the financial short-cuts we could find.

"Space is very rock'n'roll," said senior producer Marcy Brafman, when the NASA imagery was suggested. Not the first or last time she'd hit the nail on the head.

Let's cop it, I figured. The worst that could happen is that a generation of kids would grow up wondering why NASA photoshopped an American flag with MTV's used to be.

There was that attitude we needed.

My long time creative partner and couldn't-be-closer-friend Alan Goodman and I enlisted Buzz Potamkin's Perpetual Motion Pictures (soon to be Buzzco) to put together the spot. David Sameth produced for Buzz, Candy Kugel illustrated and directed (with some of the logos adapted from absolutely original illustrations by Manhattan Design's Frank Olinsky), and the guitar blast track (we thought it had the oomph of The Kinks' "You Really Got Me") was by John Petersen and Jonathan Elias at Elias/Peterson.

By the way, our original version of the spot never ran. A few days before the channel's debut, the lawyers informed us that we needed –and would never receive!– permission from astronaut Neil Armstrong to use his quotation.

Alan removed it the next day. But, another change was needed. John Lack, the executive vice president of our parent company, Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment Company, who's idea had been the seed from which MTV grew, deserved to be in on the action.
(continued on the next page)

24 hours later –one time only!– at midnight, August 1, 1981– came John's personal voice over:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, *rock'n'roll*!"

John, a huge music fan, was proud of his role in jump starting this phase of popular music's evolution. And from 1 a.m. until the very end, the rocket blast sounded with only a 'beep beep beep' in place of John and Mr. Armstrong.

The "top of the hour" ran at the top of every hour, more than 17,000 times each year (48 times each day, including its shorter variation at the 30 minute mark). Nowadays, the only sense memory/DNA that's left of it is the "Moonman" statue on the Video Music Awards (the idea of Manhattan Design's Pat Gorman). No one in the audience knows why it exists.

The spot itself had to be retired, tragically, on January 28, 1986 –more than 75,000 times in total– when the Challenger Shuttle exploded in mid-air. The end of the first space era in history.

.....

Recently, Alan added some particulars I had completely forgotten:

Alan: My memory is a little different on some of the details.

There is no question that the man on the moon was an audacious act of appropriation and historical vandalism, and an inexpensive use of our national archive of free images. But as I recall, it was just one in a sack of animated IDs we commissioned. It was, as originally designed, 10 seconds long because all our animations were ten seconds long. In fact, the bottom of the hour spot we used forever was that original 10 second piece.

As I tell the story, the "Top of the Hour" was something we learned about very late in the process – long after many if not all of the animated IDs we ordered for the launch were delivered. We understood instantly the need – it's just that no one had asked us to make one, we had spent all our budget for animation, and we were weeks away from launch. We looked at all the spots we had created and realized all but one of them worked only as the ten second pieces they were designed to be. But since the logos inside Neil Armstrong's flag were essentially on a loop, we could just keep recycling the logos inside the flag. It was the only way to make a :30 second piece out of one of our tens. By default, it became our choice.

[Fred: Buzzco's Candy Kugel reminded me that the animation was done in one week!]

Same thing with the music from Elias/Peterson Associates. We had commissioned five pieces of music that we made available to any of the animators working for us. Again, only one of those pieces could be looped. The "Duh, duh-duh, duh-duh, duh-duh" was something I could go into an audio studio and re-edit. We did three slightly different mixes and built it into a coherent piece of music 30 seconds long. There was not one single other choice.

"Top of the Hour" was a case of a happy accident! The man on the moon became an important icon for us, and lives on in the Video Music Award. But who's to say what it all might have been if we had actually planned it all!

"Top of the Hour" Stills courtesy of NASA Logos by Frank Olinsky and Candy Kugel 1981

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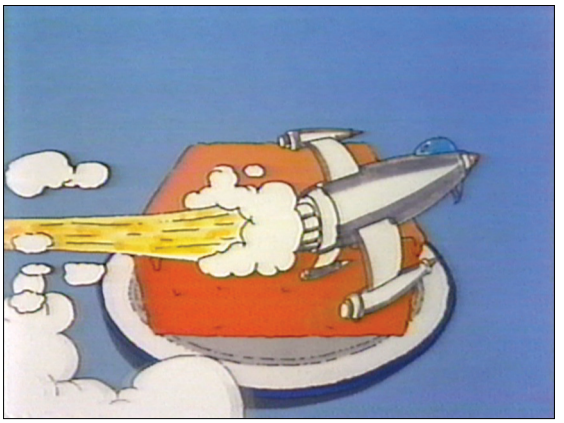
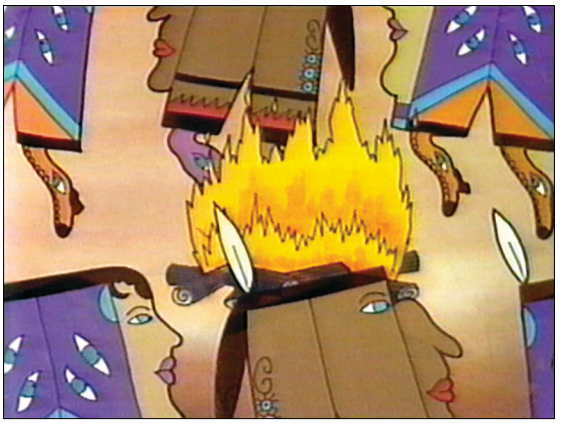
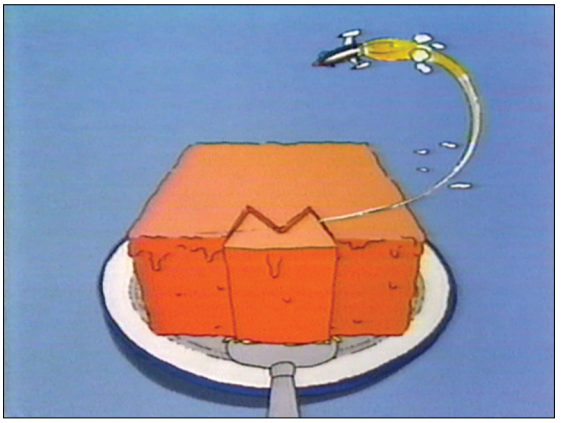
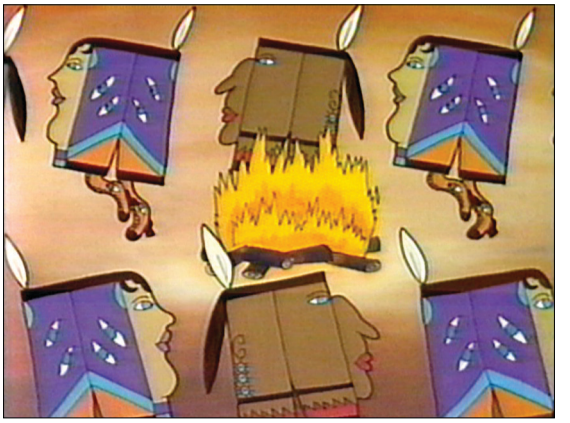
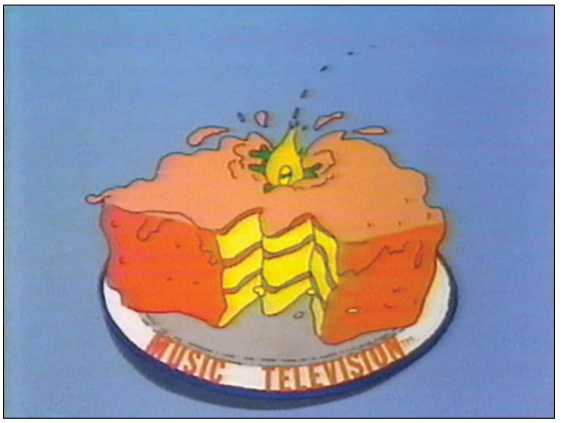
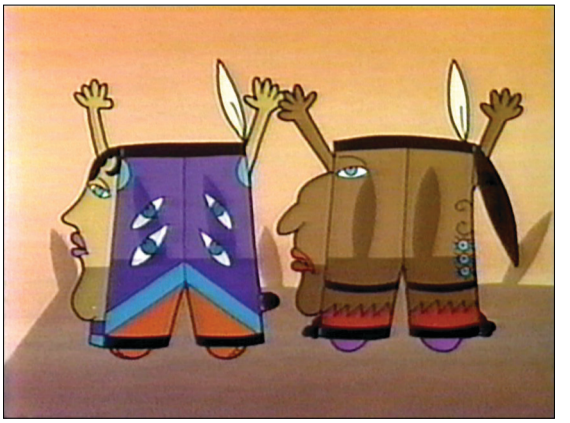
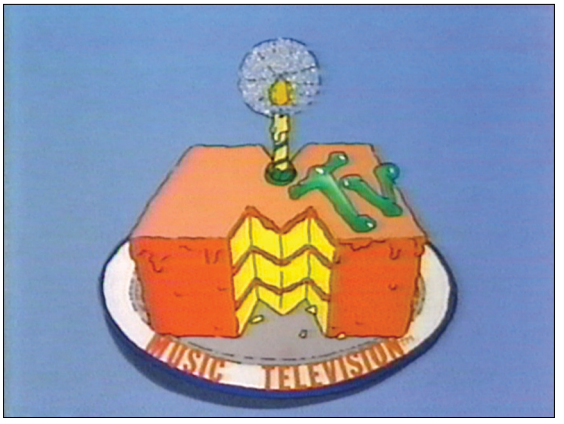
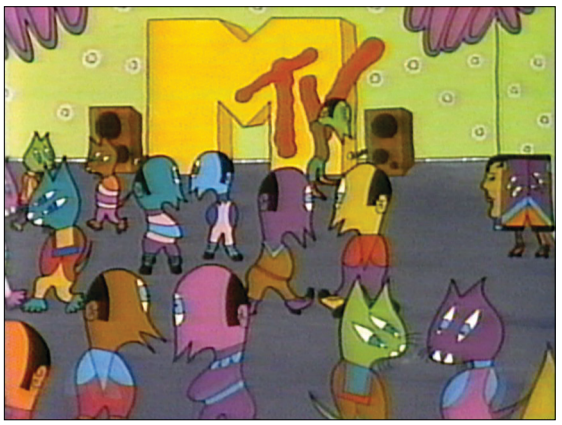
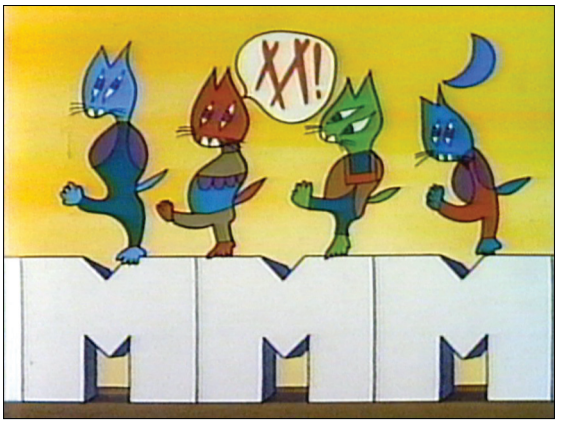
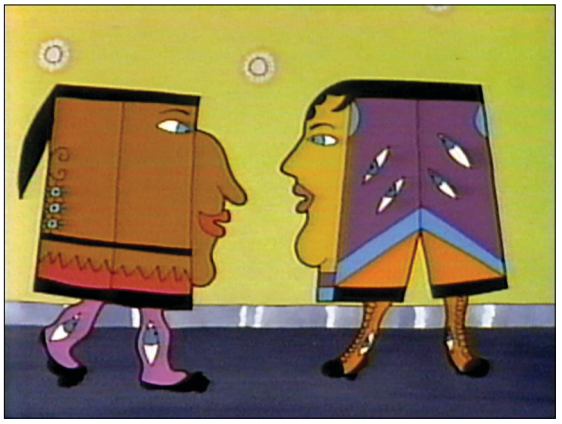






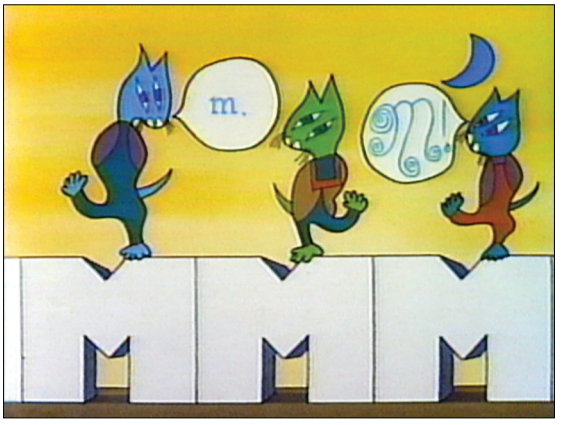



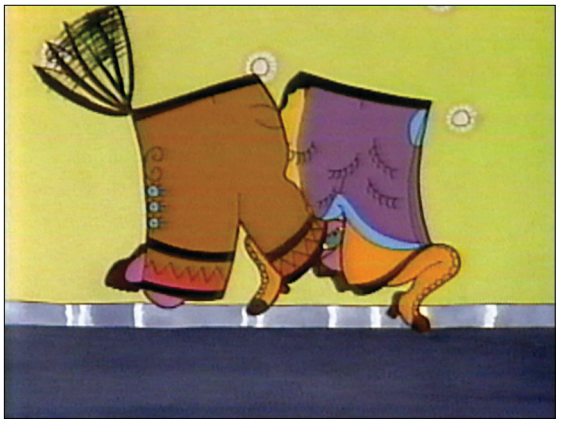
Design: Manhattan Design
Illustration: Frank Olinsky

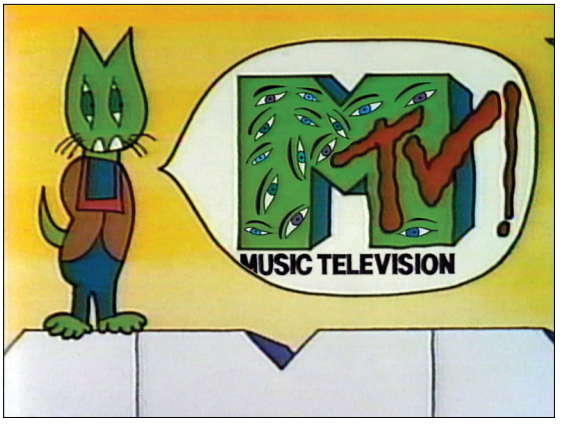




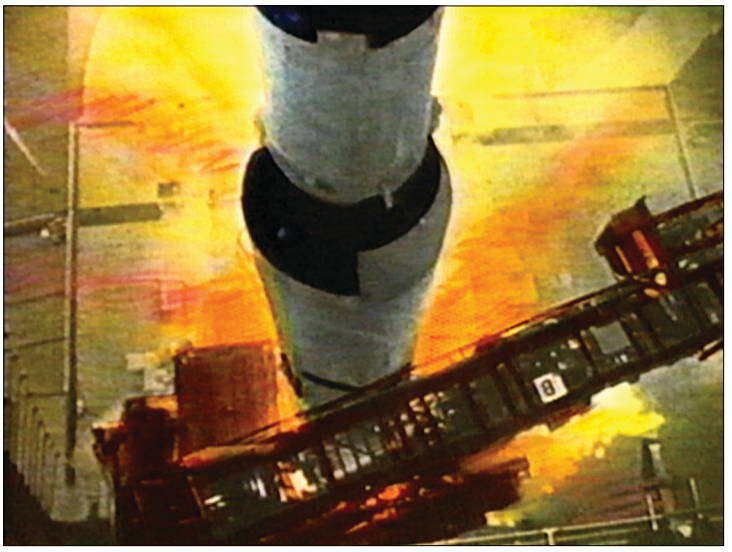


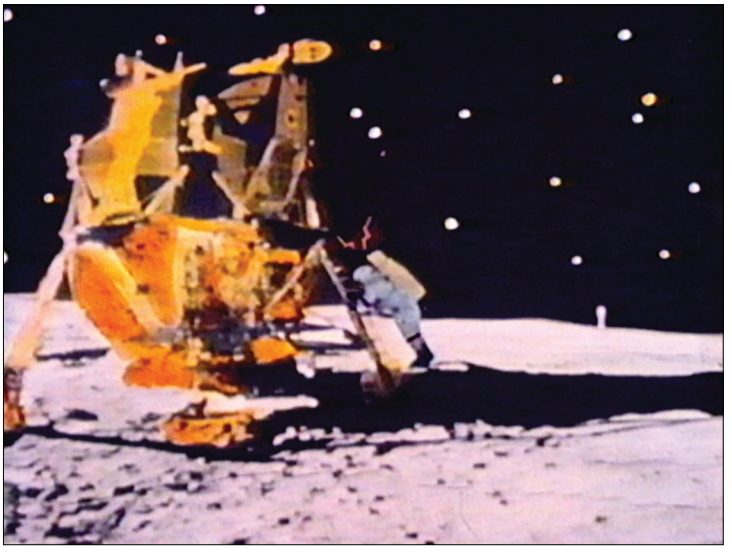






Based on illustrations by Sam Steinberg Design & direction: Candy Kugel





In 1984, MTV management decided they needed a "refresh" on the original "top of the hour" animation. After all, the music was changing all the time, the promotional graphics were changing all the time, and soon, the VJs would start changing too.

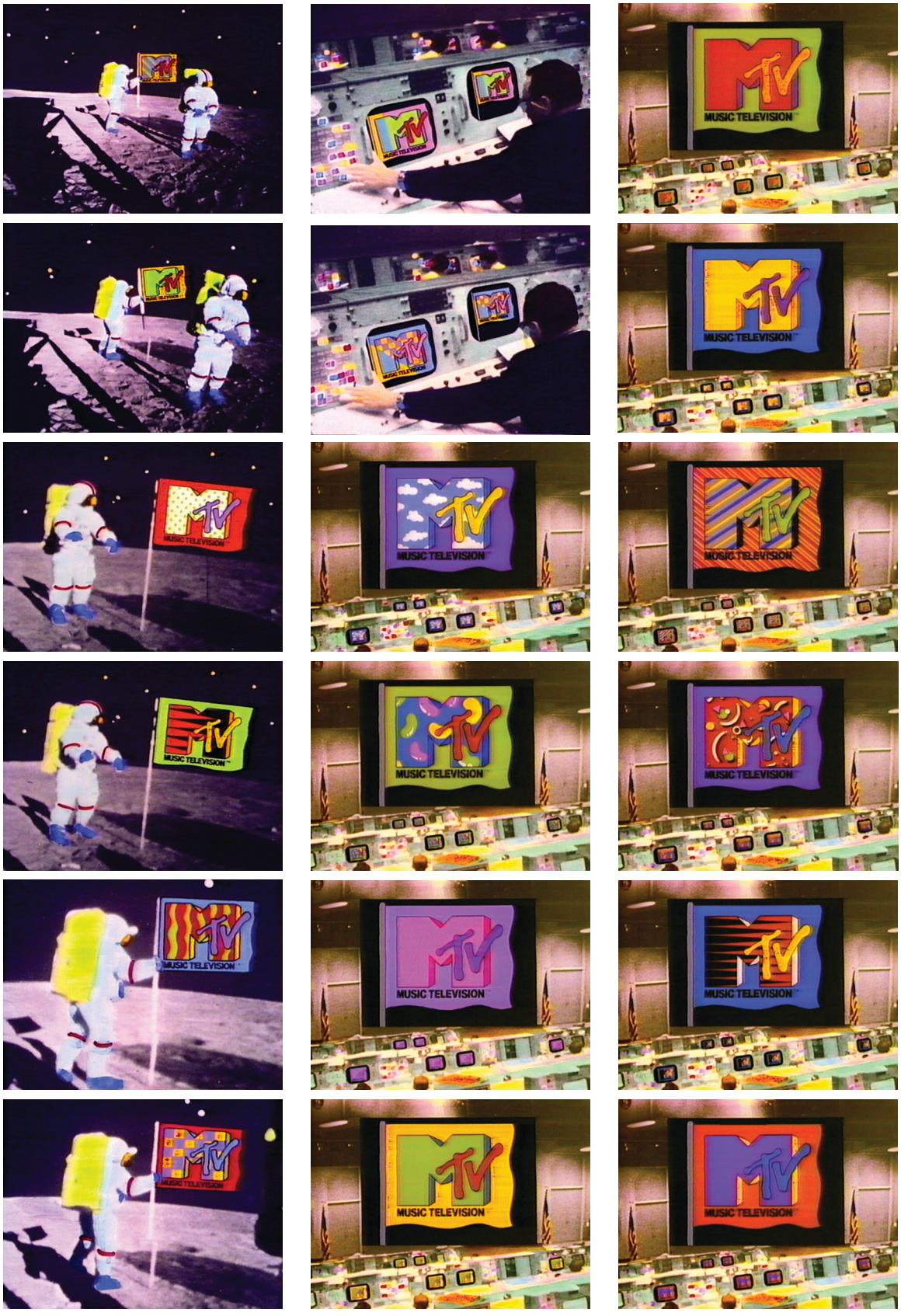
Since Fred and Alan produced the original it was preordained that Fred/Alan would do the refresh. And since Buzzco had animated the 1981 piece it seemed logical that we'd commission them for the follow up. Of course, the musical composition was already iconic, so our in-house music producer, Tom Pomposello, did an update on the Elias/Associates theme with Boston band The Del Fuegos.

"Top of the Hour" 1984

Animation by Buzzco
Hand coloring and logo designs by Candy Kugel

Footage and stills courtesy of NASA

Theme composed by
Jon Elias and John Peterson
Performed by
The Del Fuegos
Produced by
Tom Pomposello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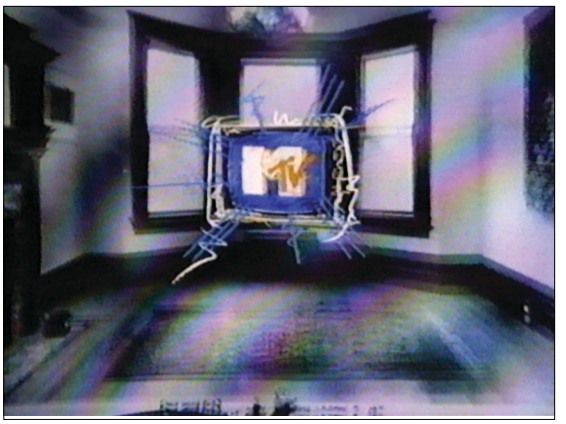
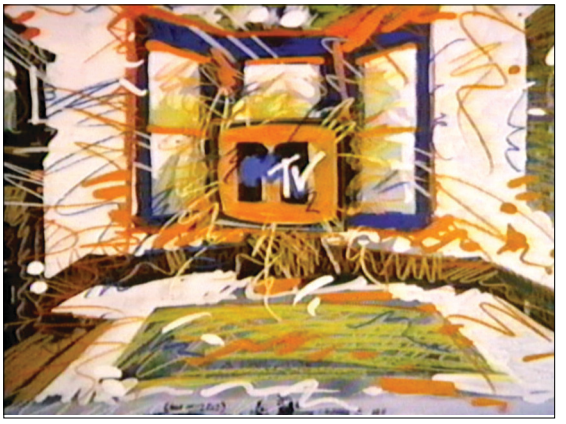


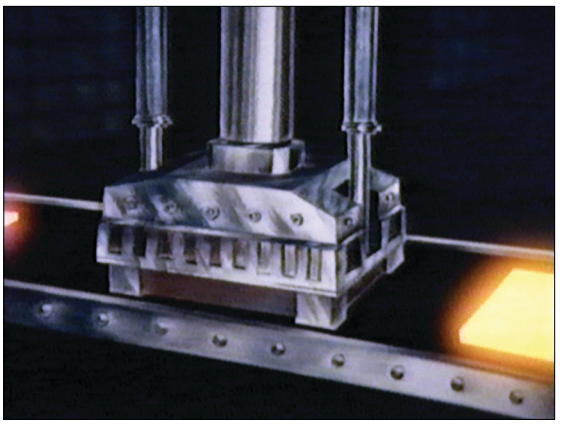
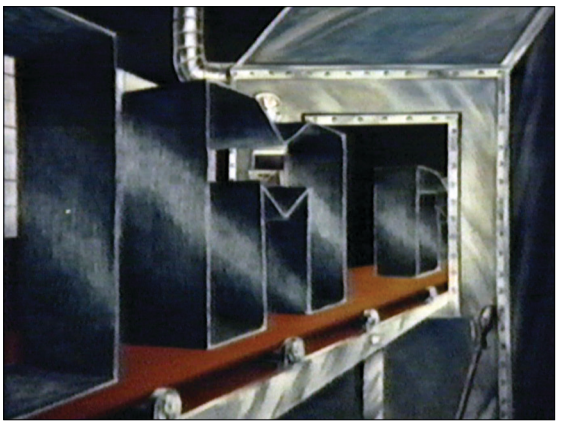
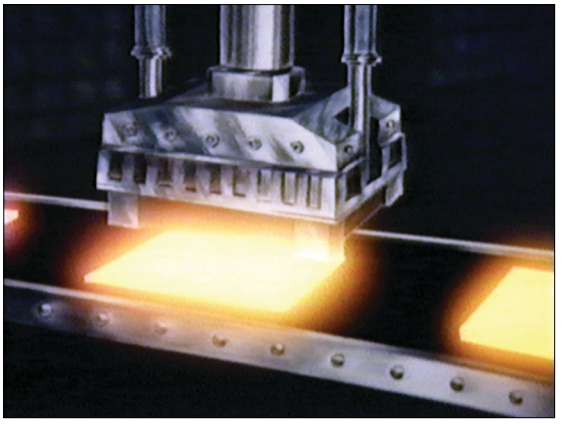


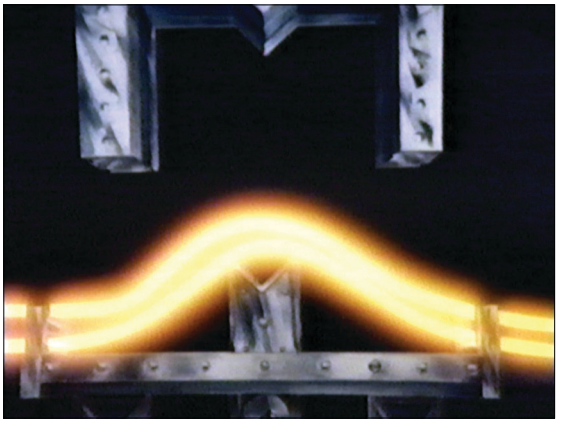
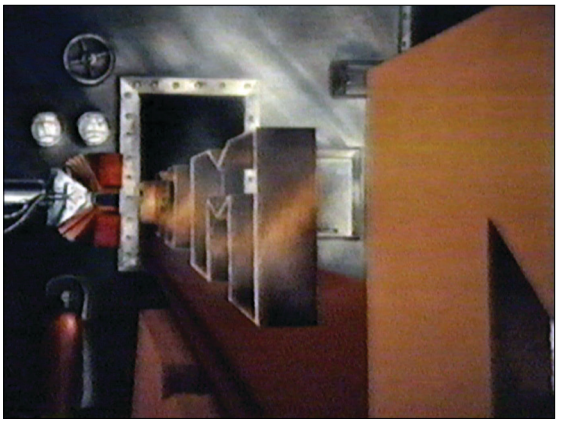
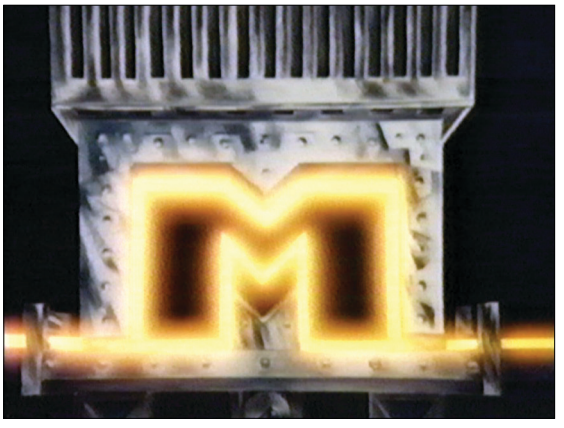
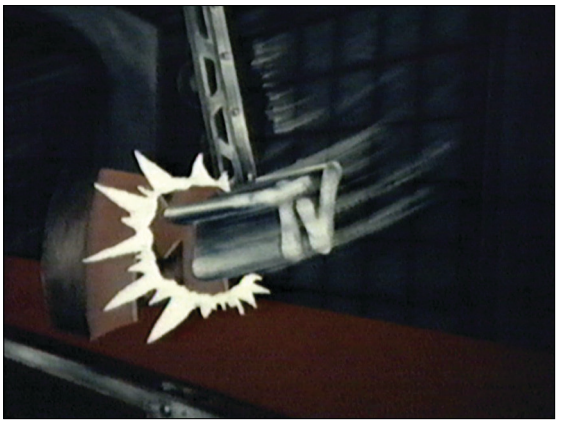
MUSIC TELEVISION

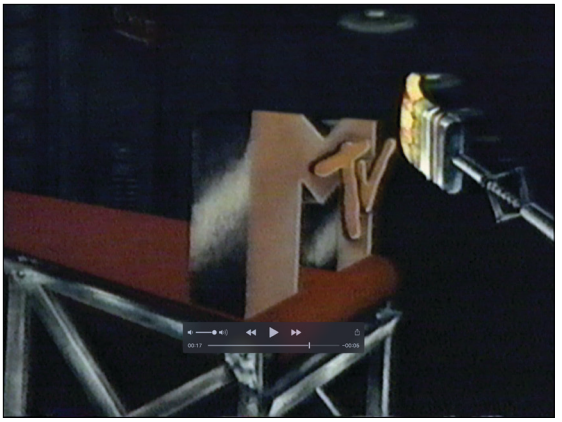
PANORAMA

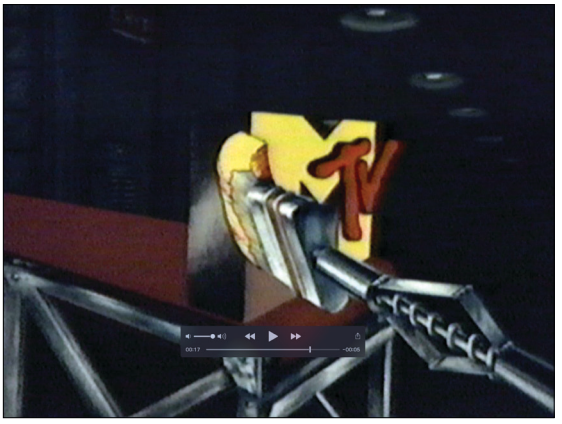
PICTURES

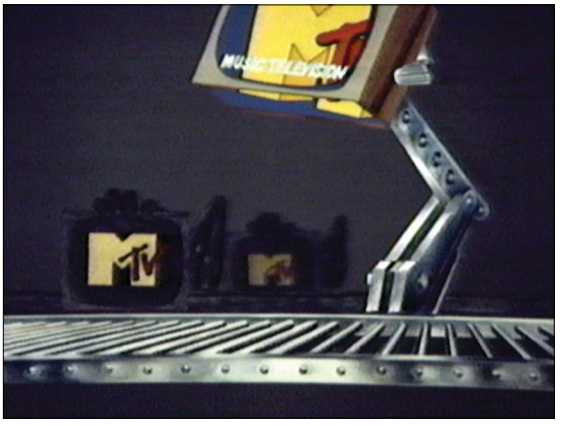
Gary Gutierrez
Drew Takahashi





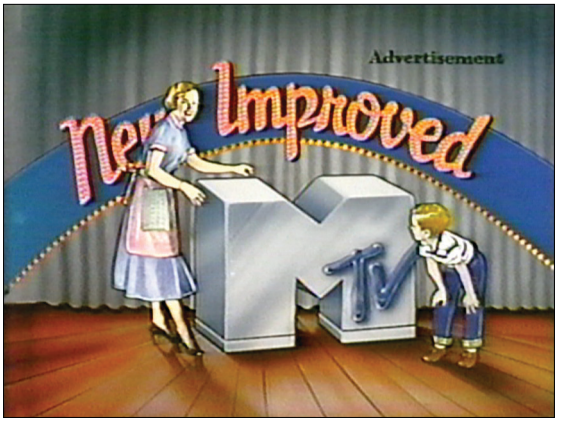


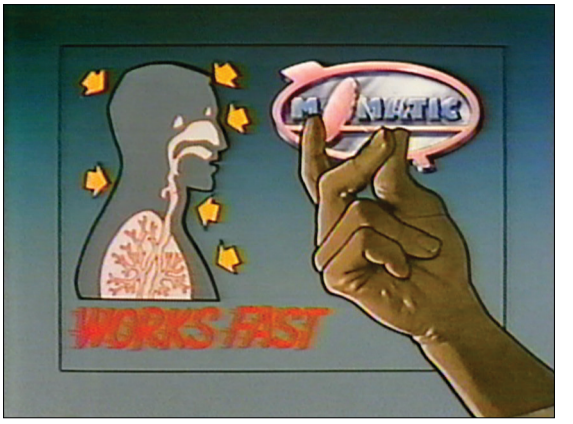
Over the 1981 Memorial Day sWeekend we met in a New York mid-town coffee shop with Drew Takahashi, one of the two co-owners of San Francisco's Colossal Pictures. Little did any of us know that over a conversation that veered through Cecil Taylor, Thelonious Monk, and oh yeah, the soon to be launched MTV, we'd started the beginning of a deep creative relationship and a lifelong friendship.

Alan and I had searched far and wide to find animation studios to work with for this new channel, all to almost no avail. We looked through 100 reels of people who'd worked on commercials and network bumpers and found one to put in a 'maybe' pile (more on them in another post). Then our colleague Sue Steinberg dropped a cassette on our desk that she thought we might like. They were another 'maybe' until the last piece, an animated video for a musician we'd never heard of. Who cares?! For those early days it was beyond awesome. They're in the 'yes!' pile (which was no pile at all.)

The studio's other co-founder, director Gary Gutierrez intuitively understood what our visual vision for MTV was all about. The rhythm, the kinetic-ness, the explosion. The studio might be expensive but they were so worth it. They totally got us. And we got them. Soon they started doing conceptual art pieces –starting with a late night snack of burgers and fries that Alan edited into our first completely weird ID– that helped cement MTV's reputation (and Colossal's) as the most creatively forward network on television.

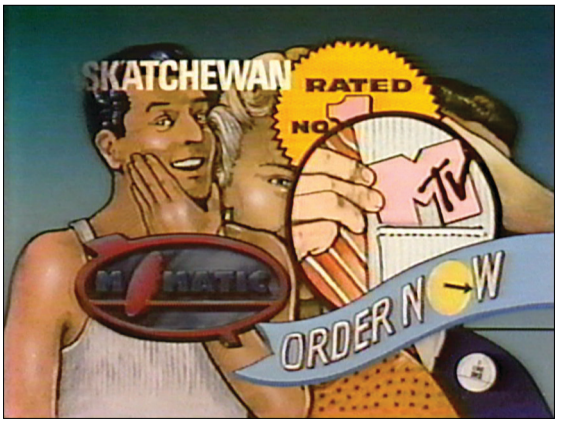
I suppose that Memorial Day trip turned out to be worth the scratch.


Advertisement
Improved
MTV


WORKS FAST

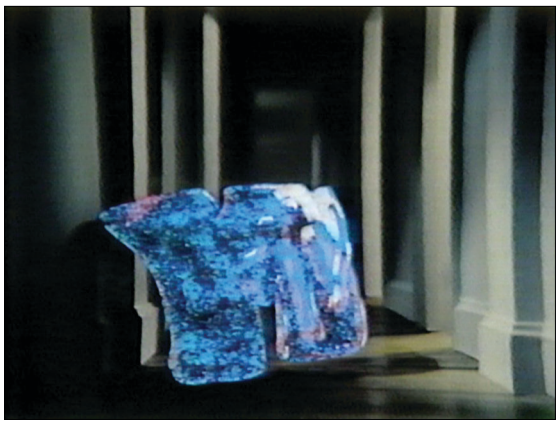
MATIC

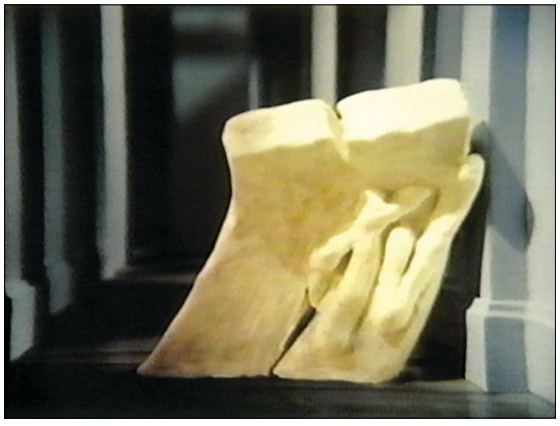
MTV
Quality

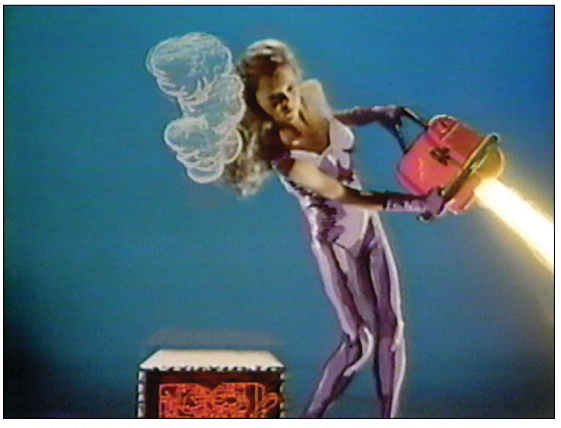

RATED
MTV
MATIC
ORDER NOW

HOME SWEET M
LET THE M SHINE IN
THE M'S, THEY ARE A' CHANGIN'
MARY HAD A LITTLE M
M AZING GRACE
M ERICA THE BEAUTIFUL
MATIC

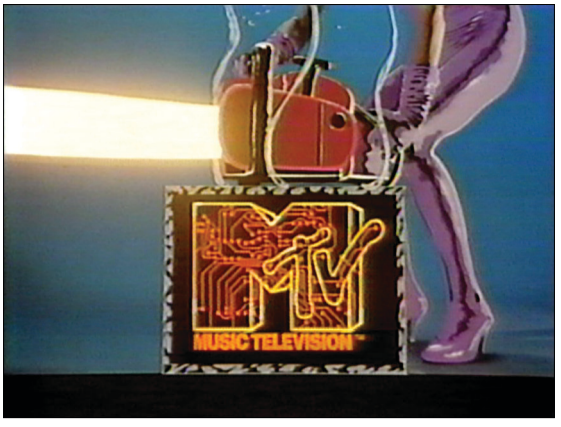
STOPS RUST!
RATED
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION
TESTED
ORDER NOW

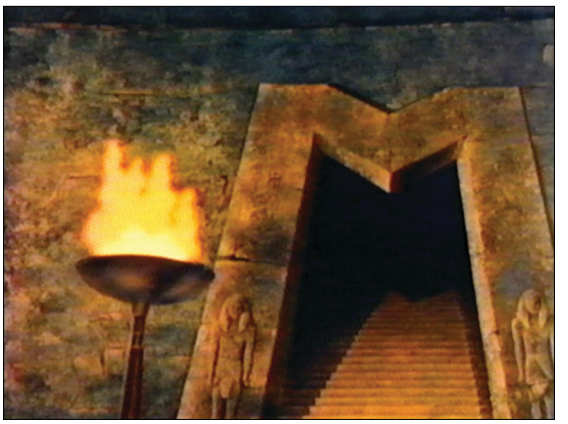
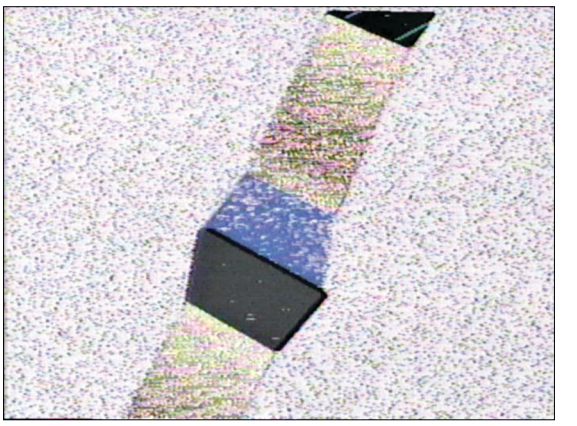


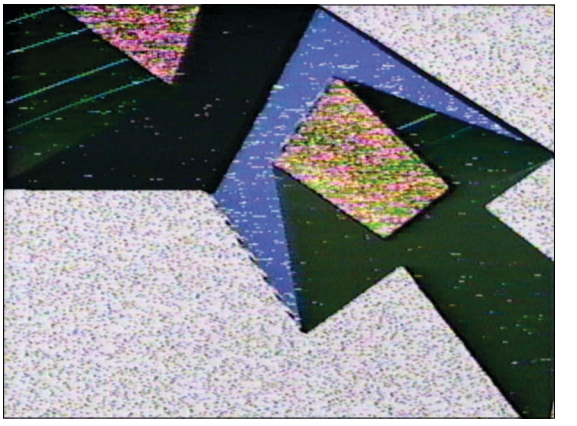
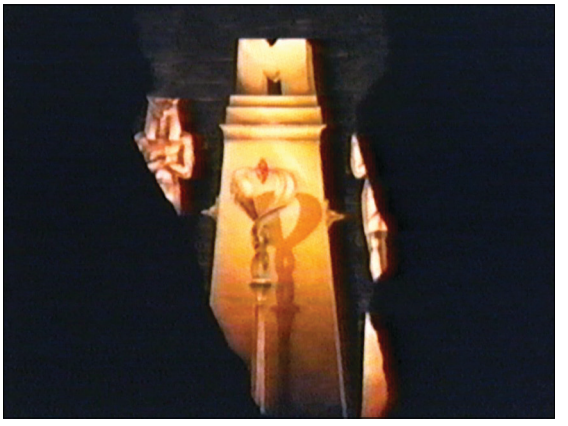
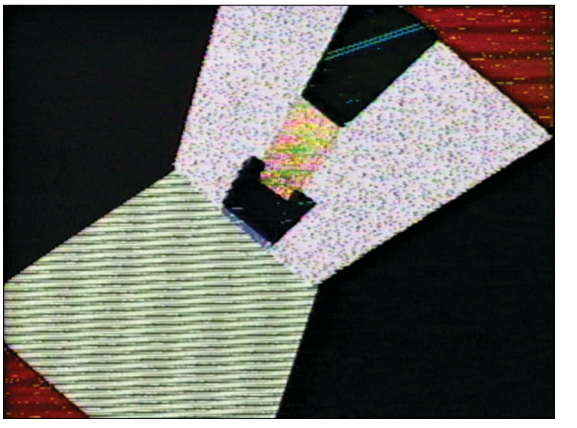
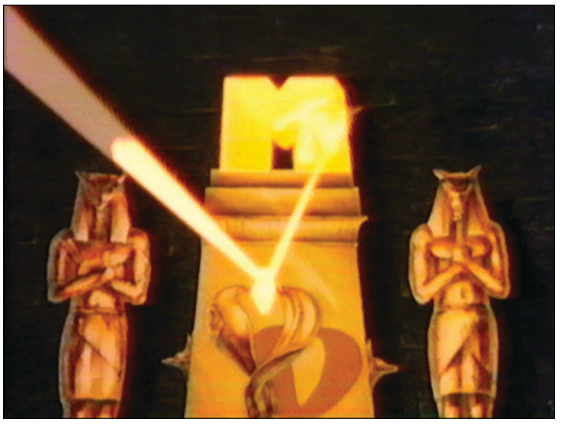
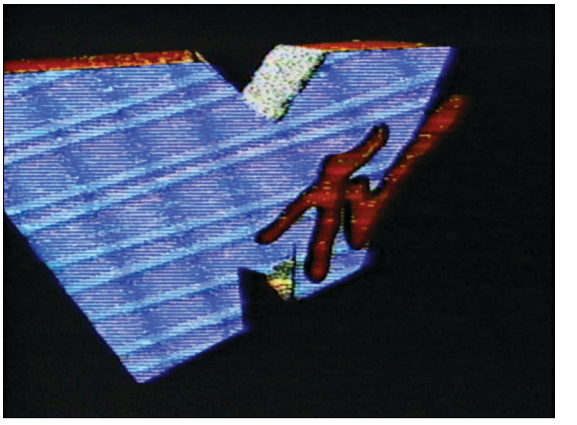


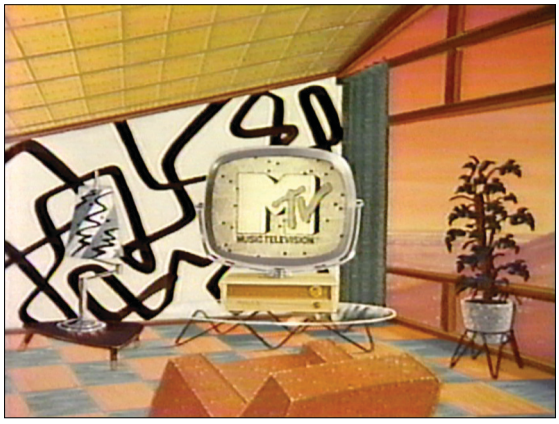


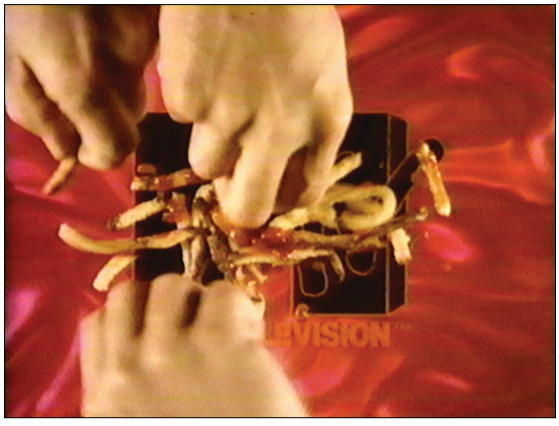
MUSIC TELEVISION™

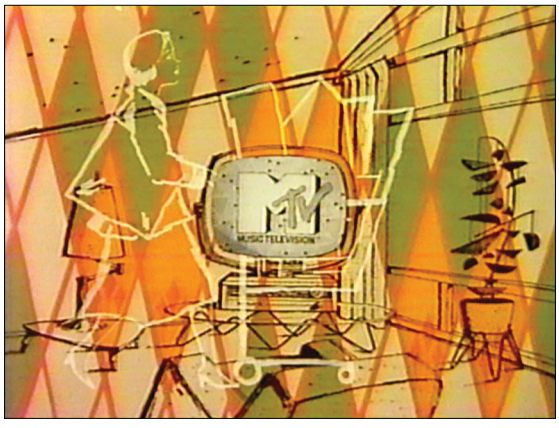

MUSIC TELEVISION™

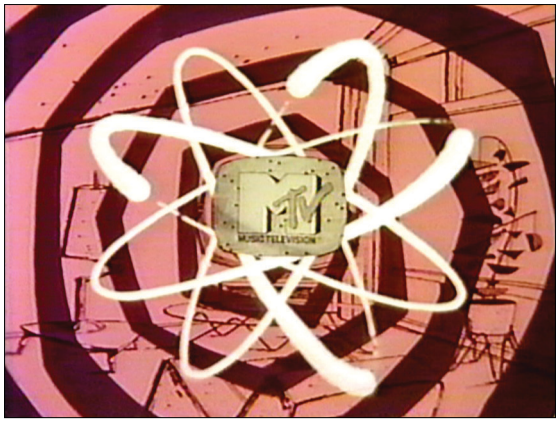



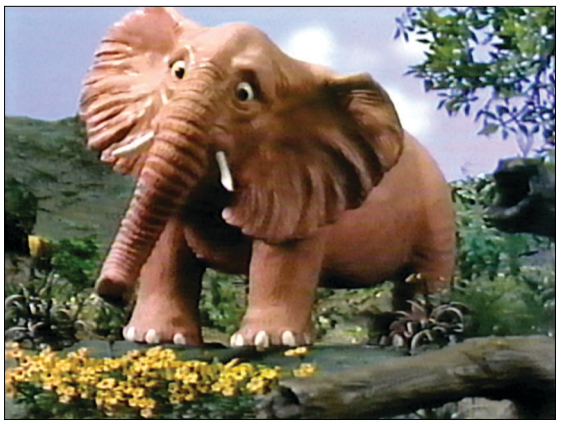










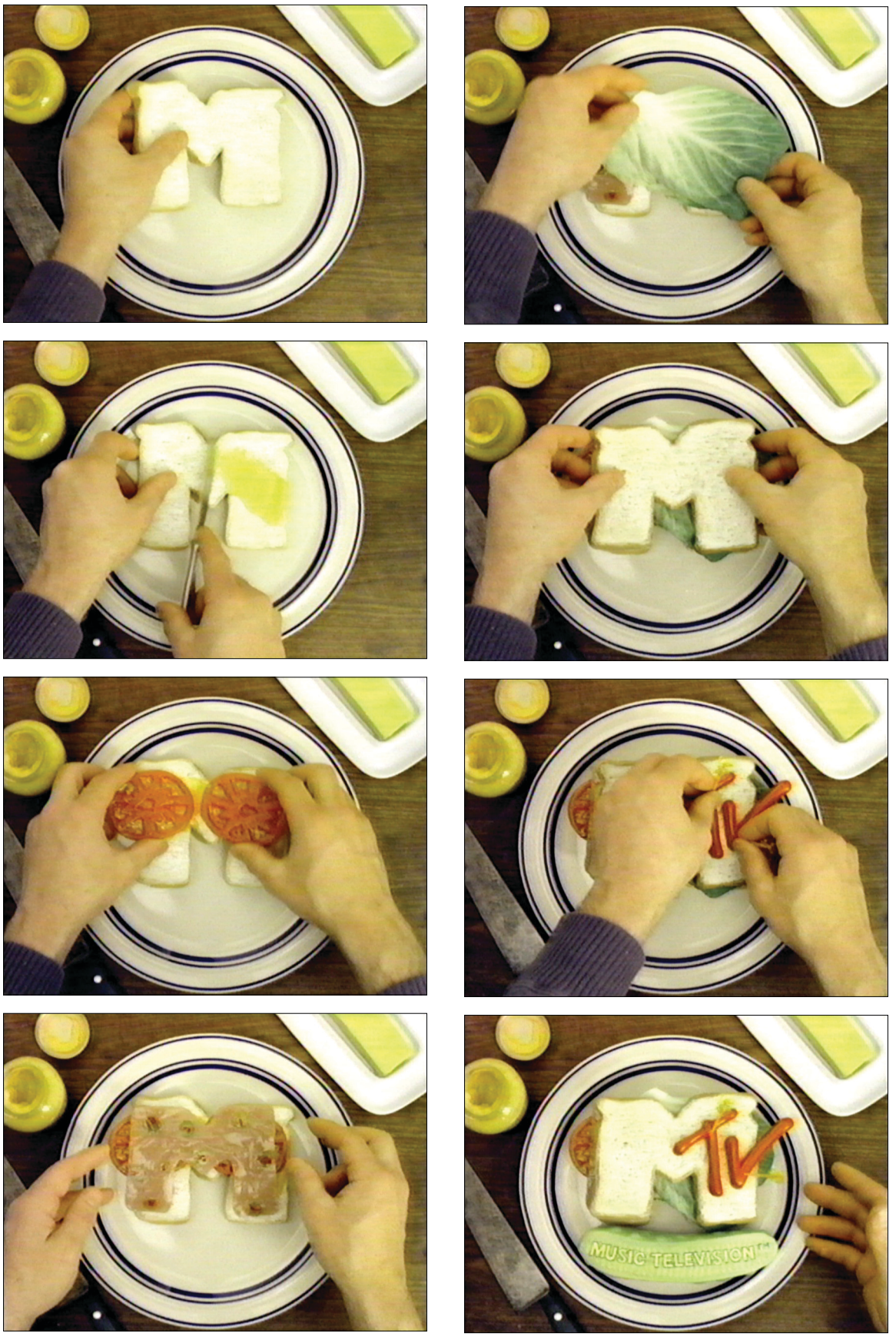






BROADCAST ARTS

Steve Oakes
Peter Rosenthal



MTV's first creative award winner Animation by Broadcast Arts 1982

Fred:

Broadcast Arts not only made the first animated MTV network identification but before the channel's second birthday they'd won us our very first creative award. Of course, the first of many to come over the years and across the globe.

Nina Silvestri was a much more patient person than I. She eventually became an ace producer, but she was already exhibiting her skills in 1981 when she was my executive assistant. She regularly needed to run herd over the bunch of wonderful, creative misfits I'd assembled at The Movie Channel and the nascent music channel we were planning at Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment Company. Our so-called offices were makeshift, with my eventual partner Alan Goodman relegated to a step stool as a chair, a typing table as a desk, and Nina was outside the room at a desk by the entrance door.

Every once in a while when I'd step out Nina would introduce me to a quiet guy sitting in the waiting chair.

"Meet Peter Rosenthal, he'd like to show you his company's animation."

Peter never had an appointment, he'd just come by and wait. I never had time in my schedule and I wasn't in the mood to see anyone's work, there were more pressing problems to deal with. Like, what was the name of our channel? And why did the big bosses reject the logo we'd ask Manhattan Design to work on endlessly for a year before we even had a name?

Well, I'm foggy on how many weeks or or months Peter waited for a meeting, but during that time we had a quiet battle with the bosses about the logo and when the issue was finally settled we had just a few weeks to get some animation done for our launch on August 1, 1981.

It was truly panic time. We needed at least two pieces –by the time Alan and I left the company in April 1983 we'd produced almost 100– a 30 or 40-second film for the top of every hour and another of what would be our standard 10-seconds.

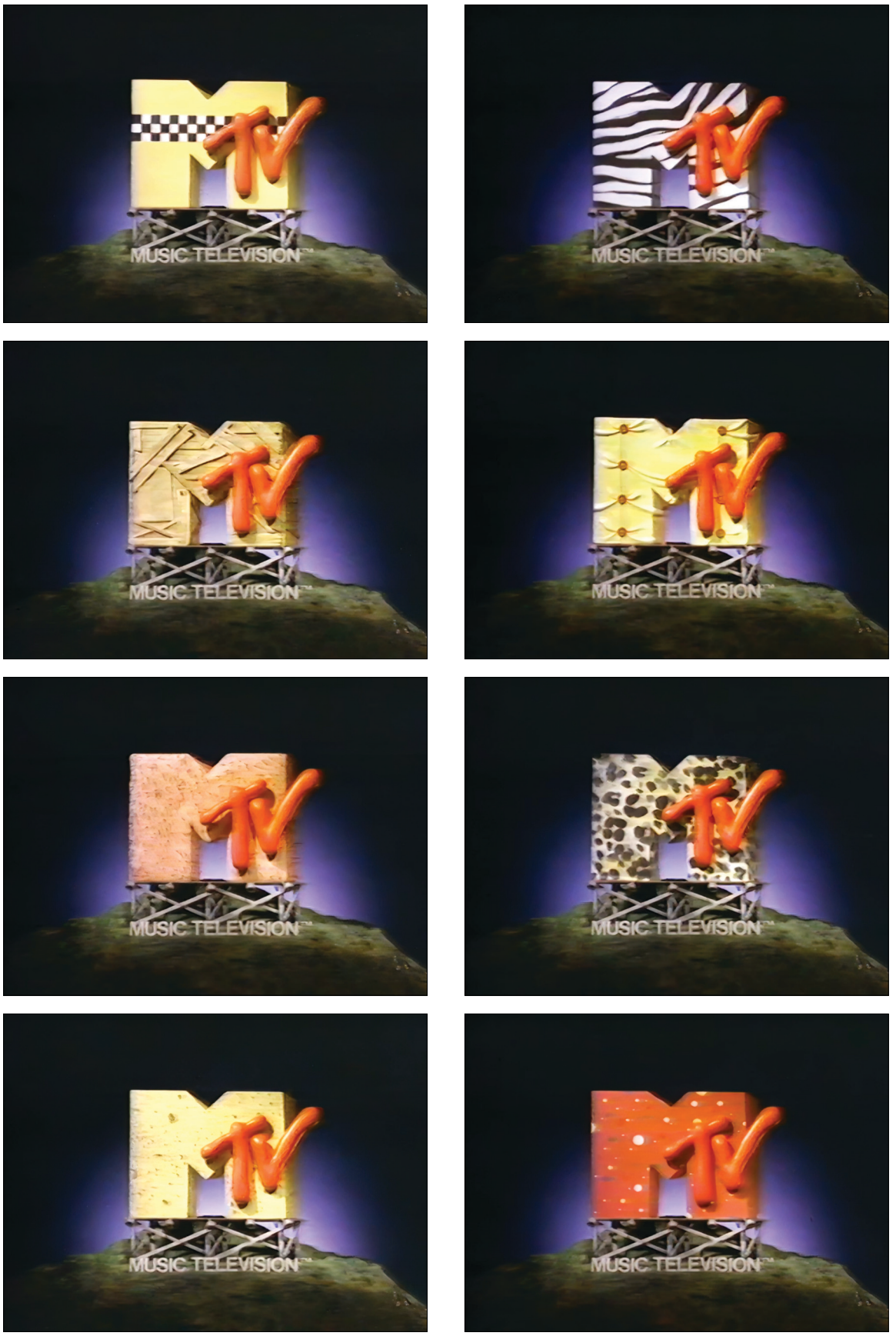
"Nina! Is that guy still out there?" We were desperate. Maybe this guy's stuff might be good? We'd already auditioned 100 animation studios' reels and found two that were even close to good for us (and those two became the next commissions for MTV).

"He's out to lunch, but I know how to find him!" Nina's skill was amazing.

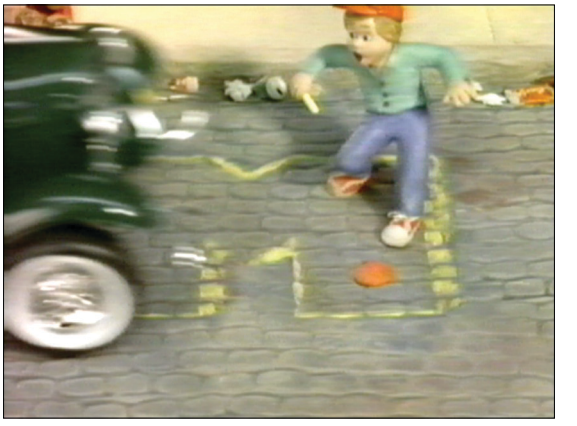
A half hour later Peter Rosenthal showed me what was supposed to be the work of Broadcast Arts –meaning him and his creative partner Steve Oaks– and it looked pretty good. At least good enough. It was entirely stop motion –the same technique for The Gumby Show. MTV boss Bob Pittman wanted a Star Wars look, and Fred struck back that he thought Gumby was the thing. Fred won.

We later found out that Broadcast Arts had no clients and the work Peter showed was stuff they'd worked on elsewhere. But, MTV was in a corner.

"We need 10-seconds of our logo in six



"Swick," the first MTV animated network identification Designed by Frank Olinsky & Broadcast Arts 1981



"Freddy buys it" by Broadcast Arts

"Bubblegum" by Broadcast Arts

weeks." I gave Peter the initial sketches Manhattan Design's Frank Olinsky had done of "versions" of the now approved MTV mark. "How much?"

"Um, $5000?" On the nose for our budget.

Six weeks later Steve and Peter delivered. Boy did they. Luckily, Frank had made it easier by pre-designing almost everything they used in "Swick." Zebra stripes, a brick wall, a New York Taxi cab and "Hairy M," which eventually became its own ID. They quickly put together a fabrication team, took one of our 'hard rock' pre-recorded tracks (you'll recognize it immediately as the MTV "theme") and just jump cut their way through all the designs.

Exactly what we wanted. MTV's logo would never stay the same, no matter what logos had done before. And ideally, it could change a lot, even in one short film.

What became of Broadcast Arts? Steve and Peter went on to make at least 20 IDs for us, and then a few for Nickelodeon too. They used their MTV "fame" to do some awesome things, most notably the wildly creative production of Pee Wee's Playhouse on CBS, before morphing into curious?ictures in New York.

Oh, and that first creative award spot? It's the one on page 63.

Never-on-TV.

(on the opposite page)

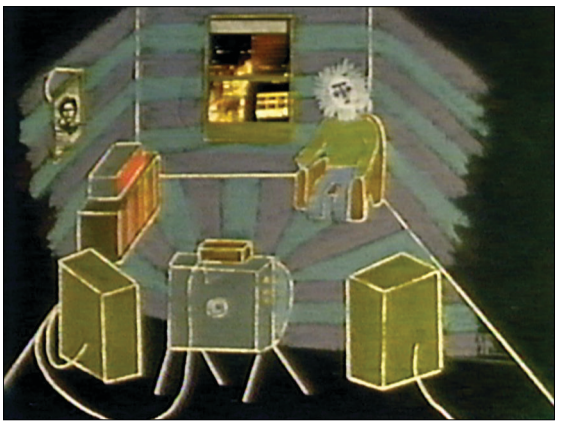
Fred: A couple of months after the network launch, Bob promoted me to Vice President of Production, MTV's first (a big deal in those pre-title inflationary days).

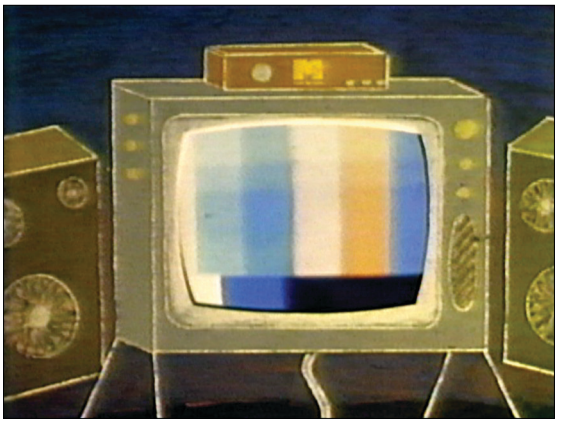
I was probably whining too much about how hard I was working.

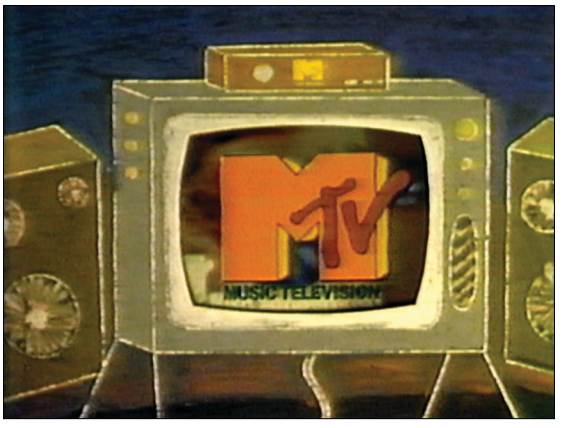
He put together a huge congratulatory event and asked Alan to make some video just for the party. Alan worked with Broadcast Arts to modify one of the awesome claymation spots they'd made for us. They put a plasticine me in the spot and ignobly ran me over.

I probably got what I deserved.

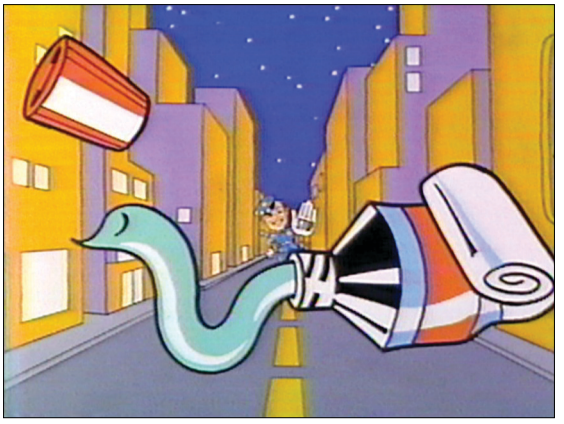
Fred and MTV boss Bob Pittman at the promotion party 1981



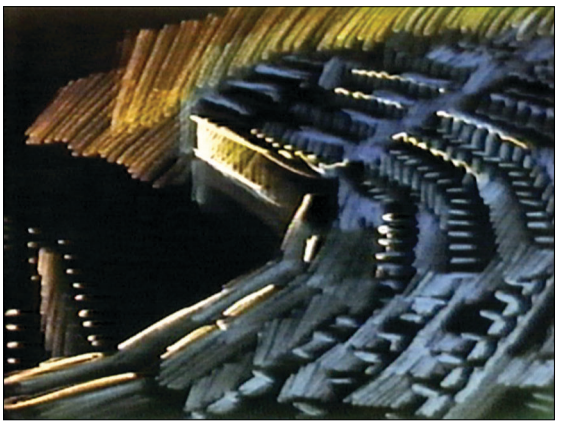



MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION

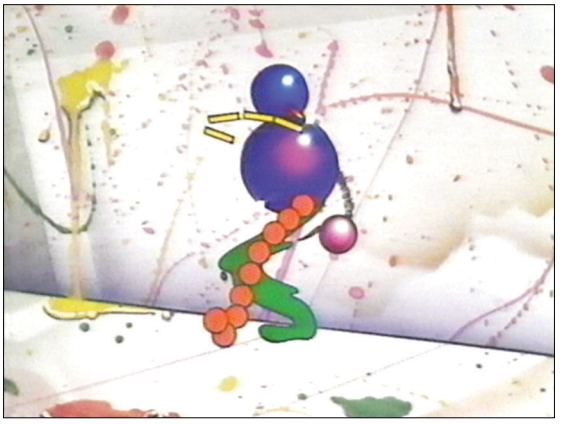
Tom Pomposello Productions

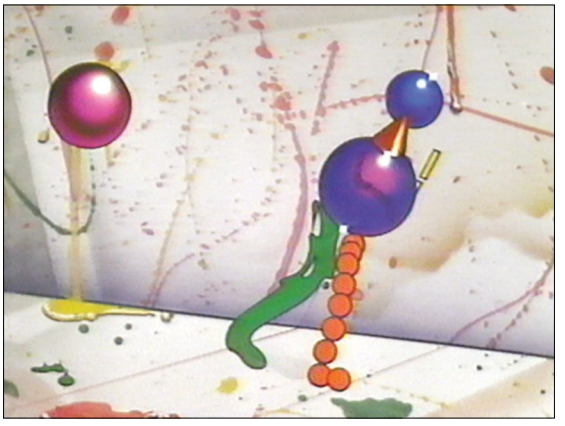


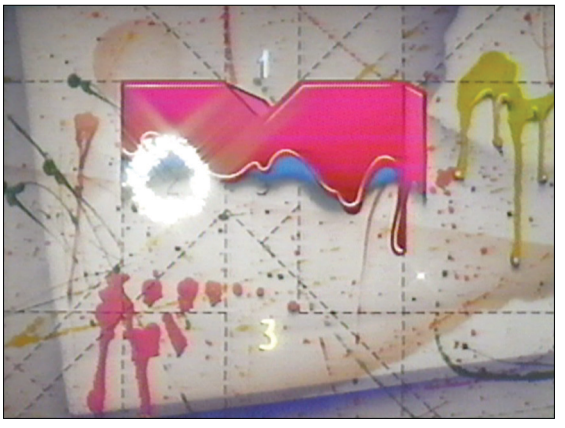
Jerry Lieberman Productions & Lou Brooks



Eli Noyes







David Burd

Silver Cloud Productions

(Opposite page, top to bottom)

Broadcast Arts, Washington DC; Eli Noyes, New York; Buzzco/ Candy Kugel à la Sam Steinberg, New York.

(This page, top to bottom)

Manhattan Design/Jerry Lieberman Productions, New York; Broadcast Arts, Washington DC.

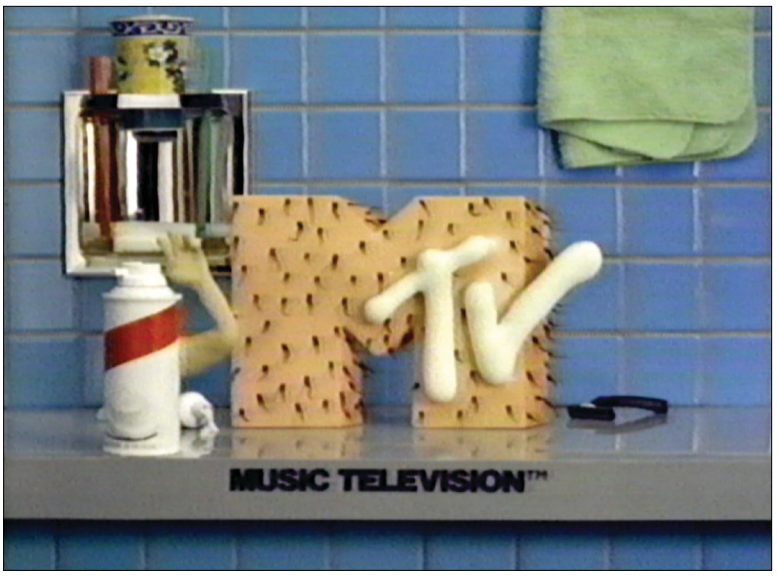
Logos, logos, logos. Do we have logos.

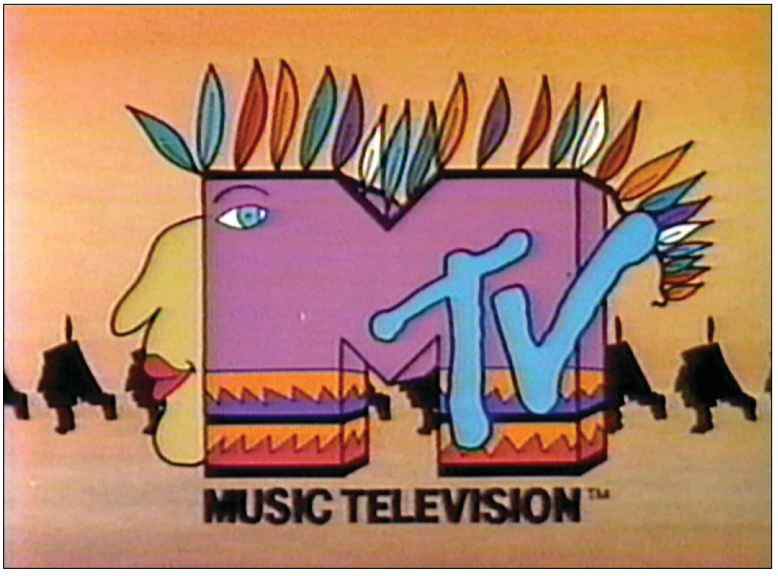
The animation producers we worked with spanned independent "art" filmmakers and commercial houses that were sick of the limitations on them from their ad agency clients. And most of them were in animation because of their beautiful graphic sensibilities which couldn't often be expressed in a normal commission.

MTV was different. And eventually, our clients at Nickelodeon, The Movie Channel, Lifetime and the others were different.

The most obvious proof of our ... idiosyncrasy? peculiarity ? contrariness? ...was the excellence of our animators. They took us seriously that our logo was a canvas for their creativity and for the respect of our viewers. For years they kept delivering results that we couldn't even imagine in their relentless variations of the opportunity that Manhattan Design made possible. As MTV spread across the world the new creative approaches multiplied exponentially.

None of it would have been possible without the first designers who actually believed us when we asked them to go for it.





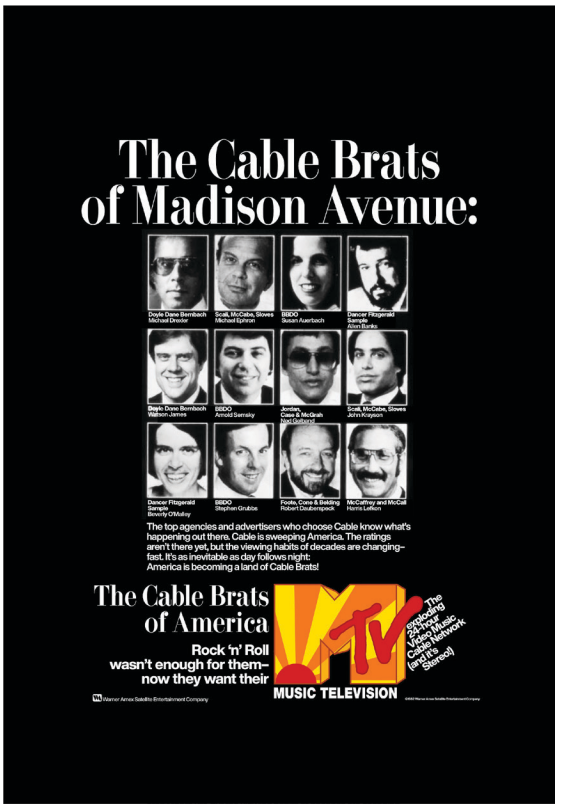
LPG/PON

Dale Pon George Lois Bill Pitts Dick Gershon

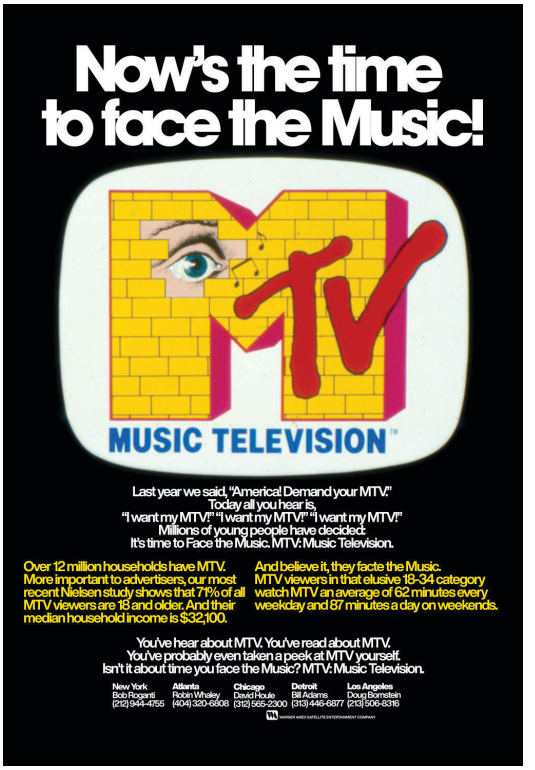
Fred's radio mentor, Dale Pon, started an ad agency with the legendary George Lois. It took over a year and a terrible MTV campaign from the equally legendary Ogilvy to convince our management to hire LPG/Pon. Dale and George were both creative visionaries, and Dale was a expert in media promotion. Despite their reputations for volatility, the quality of their work won out. We guided their print ads before Dale would execute a repurposing a '50s hot cereal commercial to become one of the most remembered ad campaigns of the late 20th Century.

We produced the campaign with Buzzco, Dale came up with the media strategy and MTV executives convinced rock stars to work for free saying...

"I Want My MTV!"


The Cable Brats of Madison Avenue:
The top agencies and advertisers who choose Cable know what's happening out there. Cable is sweeping America. The ratings aren't there yet, but the viewing habits of decades are changing–fast. It's as inevitable as day follows night: America is becoming a land of Cable Brats!
The Cable Brats of America
Rock 'n' Roll wasn't enough for them– now they want their
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION
The exploding 24-hour Video Music Cable Network (and it's Stereo!)

Pepsi's got its
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION™
The exploding 24-hour Video Music Cable Network (and it's Stereo!)
Have you got yours?
Pepsi's got the soft drink, we've got the thirsty generation. Pepsi knows–its biggest and best market is 18-34. MTV: Music Television reaches these hard-to-reach young adults. They grew up with music. They grew up with television. So we put 'em both together for demanding advertisers like Pepsi who want their 18-34's. Want yours? Say, "I Want My MTV."
MTV GROWTH You've got to be part of it. Almost 7 million subscribers now: 10 million by early next year. People want it because it's different. Cable Operators carry it because it builds their business.
MTV VIEWING Your prospects love us. In our most recent Nielsen study, 62% of all 12-34's who have MTV said they watched last week; 50% said they watched yesterday.* And, MTV viewers respond: 25,000 viewer letters per week; an average of 80,000 reponses to every on-air contest!
MTV COVERAGE You've got to have it. MTV's audience is among the elusive 12-34's–always difficult to cover with television and becoming even harder as more and more drop our of the network audience. A remarkable 77% of all MTV viewers 12+ are 12-34.*
MTV EFFICIENCY You've got to want it. MTV's efficiency is twice as good as the highest rated young adult network television. You deliver twice the advertising for teh same money.
Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment Company
New York Bob Roganti (212) 944-4755
Atlanta Michael Wheeler (404) 320-6808
Chicago David Houle (312) 565-2300
Detroit Bill Adams (313) 446-6877
Los Angeles Doug Bornstein (213) 506-8316


Now's the time to face the Music!
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION
Last year we said, "America! Demand your MTV."
Today all you hear is,
"I want my MTV!" "I want my MTV!" "I want my MTV!"
Millions of young people have decided:
It's time to Face the Music. MTV: Music Television.
Over 12 million households have MTV. More important to advertisers, our most recent Nielsen study shows that 71% of all MTV viewers are 18 and older. And their median household income is $32,100.
And believe it, they facte the Music. MTV viewers in that elusive 18-34 category watch MTV an average of 62 minutes every weekday and 87 minutes a day on weekends.
You've hear about MTV. You've read about MTV. You've probably even taken a peek at MTV yourself. Isn't it about time you face the Music? MTV: Music Television.
New York Bob Roganti (212) 944-4755
Atlanta Robin Whaley (404) 320-6808
Chicago David Houle (312) 565-2300
Detroit Bill Adams (313) 446-6877
Los Angeles Doug Bornstein (213) 506-8316
WARNER AMEX SATELLITE ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY

America is fast becoming a land of Cable Brats!

There's an incorrigible new generation out there.
They grew up with music.
They grew up with television.
So we put 'em both together – for the Cable Brats, and they're taking over America!
They're men and women in the 18 to 34 age range advertisers want most – plus the increasingly important 12 to 17 segement.
The Cable Brats buy all the high volume, high ticket, high tech, high profit products of modern America.
They're strong-willed, cunning, crazily impulsive – an advertiser's peerless audience.
They look and listen and they want their MTV.
And they buy, buy, buy.

Rock'n'Roll wasn't enough for them– now they want their

New York
Bob Roganti
(212) 944-4755
Atlanta
Michael Wheeler
(404) 320-8808
Chicago
David Houle
(312) 661-1670
Detroit
Bill Adams
(313) 446-66-877
Los Angeles
Doug Bornstein
(213) 506-8316
Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment Company

©1982, Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment Company

Agency: LPG/Pon, NY
Creative director
& strategist: Dale Pon

Production:
Buzz Potamkin, Buuzco, NY
Alan Goodman

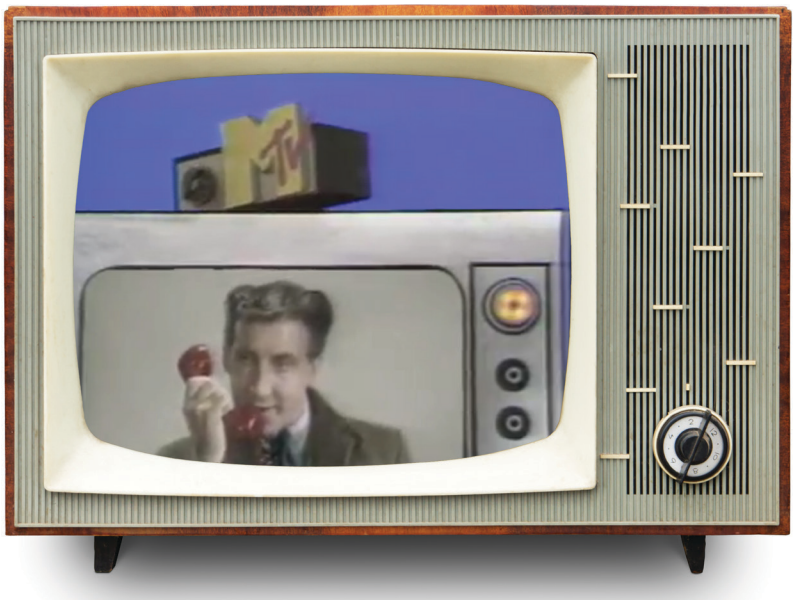
Interviews: Dale Pon
Directed by Thomas Schlamme
Logo illustrations:
George Lois

Pete Townshend

"I want my MTV!"

Pat Benatar
David Bowie
Pete Townshend

Men at Work
The Clash
Hall & Oates



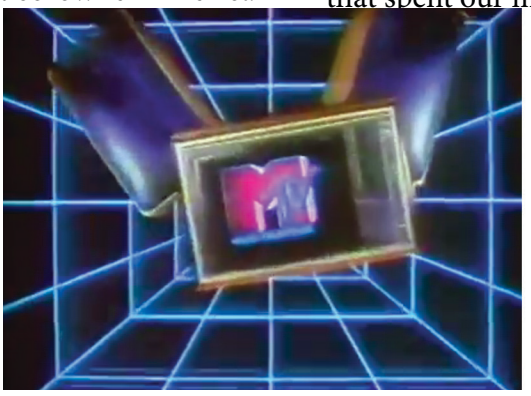
"Call your cable company and say...

"I want my MTV!"

The road to "I want my MTV!"

was, in retrospect, not that long. But when your channel is a start up that many were writing off before it even launched, it felt like a couple of lifetimes.

MTV boss Bob Pittman and Fred were pitching the new ad agency that Dale Pon and George Lois started to senior management from the start. But their explosive notoriety threw shade on Dale's undeniable successes in media promotion. Besides, one of the big bosses wanted to let co-owner American Express know we respected their blue chip agency, Ogilvy. They were a storied company, so even we had high hopes.



The loser Ogilvy commercial for MTV 1981

Sure, they trucked out the young copywriter with a satin jacket to "prove" their rock'n'roll bonafides. But, at the same time they hated our beloved MTV logo, and saddled us with a production company who was embarrassed by it. The agency was renowned for their research, but they did none for MTV. The way they treated us, we might as well have been their giant client Hershey Chocolate Bars.

The Ogilvy commercial was a complete bomb and netted MTV nothing it needed. That is, more distribution with cable operators. Who, in the infinite wisdom of the old men who ran them, wanted to run The Weather Channel instead.

Enter Dale Pon and his partners at LPG/Pon. Everyone knew MTV needed a successful promotion method that only TV ads could provide. MTV was in less than 10% of American homes. The audience was clamoring for it, but couldn't get it, thanks to the reverse ageism of the cable system programmers. And without a major åexpansion of viewers, advertisers wouldn't come on board and help pay to keep the company alive.

Dale, aside from having a creative vision for the ads, was a master media strategist. Quickly, he developed a solution that spent our meager budgets that in a way could efficiently maximize pressure on the cable operators.

Now, what was a creative solution for that pressure? George Lois had been inspired by copywriter Nancy Podbielniak's line in the print ads:

"Rock'n'Roll wasn't enough for them. *Now they want their MTV!"* George knocked off a '50s cereal commercial: "I want my Maypo!" Dale married rock stars shouting the line with The Who's Pete Townshend holding a phone:
"America! Demand your MTV!
Call your cable operator and say
'I WANT MY MTV!"

Soon enough, cable companies across America were begging us to turn off the commercials in exchange for long term distribution deals. World domination, here we come!

Not for nothing, it's been over 30 years since a rock star commercial shouting "I want my MTV!" has been on television.
But, a 2023 internet search for the phrase returns
33 million results!

Design by George Lois, LPG/Pon, New York Rolling Stones tongue illustrated by John Pasche

We left our jobs at MTV to start Fred/Alan in April 1983, convinced we could have an independent career, using our street smarts, skills and talents. Soon after we left, Bob Pittman, our former boss and MTV Networks president, hired us right back as consultants, which continued until we closed Fred/Alan in 1992.

Over the next few years our company broadened its mandate at MTVN to reposition Nickelodeon's ratings from worst to first in all of cable television, launch VH1, and invent Nick-at-Nite. And by 1988 we repositioned Fred/Alan from just the world's first branding media branding consultancy to a full service advertising agency, not only strategically creating and producing ads, but also the media buying and placement of TV, radio and print ads.

...

(Pages 82 & 83)

Fred/Alan's first MTV ad assignment was a bit of a fire drill.

The cable wars really began around MTV.

And MTV won.

A few years into the cable era relations between the programmers and cable system operators diverged from "we have to work together to beat the broadcasters" to "we [programmers] need more money to grow" and "no," said the operators.

TCI, then the country's largest biggest operator out of Denver, decided MTV would be a good target. TCI's CEO, John Malone, took MTV off the air. After all, parents paid the cable bill, not the young'uns who liked pop music.

33 years old, MTV boss Bob Pittman was fearless and he wasn't about to back down to anyone, even someone like the powerful Malone, who was already known as the "Darth Vader of cable."

First off, his team contacted every rock star in the company Rolodex so that they would all understand that the most powerful sales tool in the history of the music business was being threatened. Any time they were interviewed, the artists shouted out how their fans were being deprived. Any of the bands that were available were booked into a series of "SAVE MTV!" concerts in TCI's Denver area venues.

And then, Bob called Fred/Alan.

Once we understood the situation, Alan went to work and wrote a commercial that included:

Suddenly, everything changed.

If your MTV's missing, call 'em. I'd call.
Tell them "Don't make decisions for me!"
Tell 'em "I want what I paid for."
Tell them:

"I want my MTV...Back!"

Alan: The 'I want my MTV back' campaign is interesting because of how many other networks tried to do the same thing when THEY got kicked off during contract negotiations, and utterly failed. The fact is, "demand" was something that always worked for MTV ever since the launch because our viewers

felt locked out. Do you think a lot of Lifetime viewers were motivated to grab the phone and call their cable operators when their signal went off?

“I remember Tom Godici, then one of our fantastic, but junior, art directors, with this campaign. I was slated to go direct one of the stars –can’t remember which one– and I walked into Tom’s office and told him to go instead. He was a little surprised and nervous about it, but I told him I trusted him and knew he could do a good job. I loved that about our agency, that we would give people a shot.”

Needless to say, Pittman's plan worked. In a couple of days, MTV was back to ruining the youth of America.

...

(Pages 84 & 85)

Tony Bennett's career revived 25 years after his style of music had been tidal waved by the rise of rock'n'roll. But, it didn't start with his 1994 Unplugged concert, the conventional wisdom. Fred/Alan brought Tony to MTV in 1988.

We had recently grown our business beyond its programming and branding roots at the request of Nickelodeon and MTV, becoming a "full service" advertising agency. We'd specialized in on-air promotion, but MTV Networks management recognized our role in reimagining the unique role their channels played in the lives of their loyal audiences. In fact, they credited us in actually establishing that loyalty.

We became a "full service" advertising agency and brought in agency pros. Ed Levine and Noel Frankel were just in time for us to reinvent "I want my MTV!" past the original conception.

To make a long story short, Noel took the idea of reinvention even more seriously than we did. He rewrote the Cole Porter classic "I Concentrate on You," and suggested we book Tony Bennett to sing it. Tony's son Danny had just taken over his management and was determined to introduce his father to new generations. Danny jumped at the offer.

"I Want My MTV!" would never be the same.

Alan: Tony was a sweetheart, sketching every spare minute (quite a talented artist). I own an original copy of his first album for Columbia, which he signed for me. "Your voice was so incredibly high then," I commented. "I was the original Michael Jackson," he told me.

.....

By the way, we learned a great agency lesson from Noel on this shoot. He decided the floor needed to be changed. Always budget conscious, we balked at the $5000 up charge.

"No, no," Noel insisted. "The client will pay for it all!" Oh.

...

Client: MTV: Music Television
Account supervisor: Ed Levine
Account executive: Jessica Wolf

Phil
Collins

Billy
Joel

'Suddenly, everything changed.
One minute there was music.
The next minute... nothing.
Just like that! They took off MTV.
It's the local cable company, you know.
It's the guy you pay, every month.
Is it fair to take your MTV away?'

Rod Stewart

Paula Abdul

'I think if we all put the pressure on,
they're going to have to change their mind.
If your MTV's missing, call 'em. I'd call.
Tell them "Don't make decisions for me!"
Tell 'em "I want what I paid for."

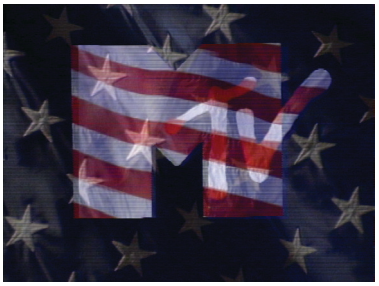
'Tell them, "I want my MTV... Back!"'

Agency: Fred/Alan, Inc.
Copywriter & art director:
Noel Frankel
Director: Robert Small RSE
Production design: RSE
RSE producer: Jim Burns
Fred/Alan producer: Albie Hecht
Arrangement & recording:
Garry Sherman
Executive producers:
Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert

[Tony Bennett sings
Cole Porter's
"I Concentrate on You"
Lyric's altered by
Noel Frankel]

"Whenever skies
look gray to me,
and trouble begins
to brew,
Whenever the winter
winds become
too strong...
I want
my MTV."

Tony Bennett
and Alan 1988



(announcer)
"It doesn't sound like TV, it doesn't look like TV,
it doesn't even feel like TV."

"Sure, you love TV. But sometimes you gotta ask yourself..."

(Tony talks) "TV or MTV?"

(Tony sings) "I want my MTV."

Five years after Fred/Alan was founded, we'd become a bona fide, full service advertising agency. The distance between being founding employees of MTV and being under the thumb of channel marketing executives was becoming really annoying.

Each person at MTV had evolved a different set of standards to describe the place. Anyone who didn't agree, even their own co-workers, was derided as someone who didn't "get it." And as the people who led the effort to develop the original "hymn sheet," we decided we needed to do something about it.

Alan wrote the first official "positioning" paper for MTV. Logically argued, well written and vetted from top to bottom at MTV, there was one section that wrapped their ethos up perfectly.

"Watching TV is ***predictable***.

"Watching MTV is ***reliable***,
not predictable.

"It's *Normal TV vs. MTV*."

Or, as a future programming head would put it when deciding whether or not to greenlight an MTV show:

"Does it have that 'fuck you?'"

With this positioning, not only could we have a yardstick that everyone could agree on, but could guide our future advertising efforts.

The so-called "Burning Man" campaign from 1987 *(pages 88-91)*

followed this strategy perfectly.

The core phrase of print, outdoor and TV advertising paraphrased directly from Alan's paper:

"TV? or MTV!"

The featured players? Rock stars –like Jon Bon Jovi, John Mellencamp, Cindy Lauper, The Bangles, Cher– natch. And... the Burning Man.

MTV had been such an influence on all of television that hosts started shedding their stiff formalities, including everything from hair styling to costuming. We thought that MTV's reaction to "normal TV" trying to cop its informalities would be to put our spokesperson in a suit and tie. But how did a well dressed man represent MTV's rebellion?

Set him on fire.

Of course. The challenge in those pre-computer graphics days was that we had to actually set the guy on fire. (Watching the outtakes was harrowing, as Alan and Ed Levine had horrified faces when it looked like his hair might have flamed up too.)

The ads were shot as 10 second segments which were then mixed and matched into a dozen different spots that could make watching them, over time, always fresh.

The challenge for advertising in the early '90s was that MTV –actually, all of the quickly maturing cable channels– had a loyal, consistent audience. Further, expensive television ads were considered a bit of a money sink. On the other hand, there were special interests that needed constant shoring up. Cable operators (who paid MTV for carriage), the record industry and artists' managers (who had other ways of spurring on record and concert ticket sales), and most of all, advertisers (who had a lot of other places to offset MTV's premium ad rates).

Cable operators and advertisers *(pages 96-7, 99)* had finally understood that they needed to sell ads to the 12-34 year old viewers that MTV dominated like no other channel. That called for print advertising in several trade magazines. Chip Simons was a photographer whose singular style would make him a regular Fred/Alan contributor. His pictures of our young audiences stood out in print that usually focused on the most boring imagery in existence.

Billboard magazine *(pages 100 & 101)* was the primary trade publication for the music industry. The programmers gave us a list of the expanding group of recording artists currently represented on the channel.

Black and white photography was the ticket in the mosaic of color that plastered music magazines. Fred/Alan creative director, Noel Frankel, made sure the art direction dominated the visual space that made certain that the ads couldn't be missed by anyone.

It's fair to say that the campaign in **Rolling Stone** *(pages 102-117)* might have been one of the agency's favorites. There was a sense that media buyers susceptible to MTV's charms mirrored the magazine's readers, a perfect place for our persuasions.

Art director Tom Godici was the champion of this campaign, selecting and soliciting a group of fine artists – with a mix of household names, ad biz faves, and soon-to-be's– most of whom would rarely be included in a commercial effort.

Our favorite ? Hands down, R. Crumb. Generally, Tom would contact the artists personally, tell them something about the campaign, and emphasize that we'd want their take on our headline "Just when you think you know what it is... it's MTV." Crumb's representative told Tom it was extremely unlikely Crumb would participate, but please send over some of the other artists' work and that he'd send it over to Crumb in France. Tom dutifully packed up the stuff with a personal letter telling Crumb we knew he hated contemporary music but we loved his work.

Months later the package was mailed back, seemingly unopened. Sure enough, the original contents spilled out, to all appearances, unread. But Tom's eyes popped when along with all the other stuff flies out an old, yellow edged piece of onion skin typing paper with the Crumb drawing and a note.

"Please forward the $300. My wife is spending money faster than I can earn it."

©1987 MTV NETWORKS

MUSIC TELEVISION

MUSIC TELEVISION

MUSIC TELEVISION

MUSIC TELEVISION

MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION®

MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION®

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MUSIC TELEVISION®

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MUSIC TELEVISION®

Logos illustrated & animated by
Marv Newland, International Rocketship, Vancouver

MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION®

MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION®

MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION®

MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION®

TV?
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION

TV? or MTV!

Bus side advertising 1988
Illustration by Lou Brooks

"Tired of award shows that put you to sleep...? Stay up with Bon Jovi, Cyndi Lauper and Madonna!"
Also Performing:
Bryan Adams
Aerosmith
Bangles
The Cars
Crowded House
Whitney Houston
Los Lobos
Run DMC
Whitesnake
Appearing:
Sandra Bernhard
Lisa Bonet
Bobcat Goldthwait
Dennis Hopper
Elton John
Kenny Loggins
Howie Mandel
Robbie Nevil
Poison
Vanna White
MUSIC TELEVISION
1987 MTV Video Music Awards
9PM on MTV
Live From The Universal Amphitheatre, Friday, September 11th.

SHE SHIFTED UNCOMFORTABLY IN HER SEAT. HER BACK CLUNG TO THE SIMULATED VINYL. A BEAD OF SWEAT DRIPPED OFF HER CHIN. THEN, IN A FLASH, IT CAME TO HER. BINGO!
(TO BE CONTINUED)

WATCH, WEEKNIGHTS AT 7PM AND SUNDAY AT 8 PM. ONLY ON MTV.

MTV MUSIC TELEVISION®
REMOTE CONTROL™

© 1989 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.

© 1989 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.

A PRISONER!

SO YOU CAN'T GET OUT OF THE REGULAR WEEKEND WITH THE FOLKS, BUT YOU CAN STILL WATCH IRREGULAR TV.

MTV MUSIC TELEVISION®

WATCH WEEK IN ROCK, SATURDAY AT 6 PM AND SUNDAY AT 9 PM. ONLY ON MTV.

WEEK *IN* ROCK

"GRRRMMMUUUMMM... I WANT MY MTV™!"

© 1989 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.

CAPTIVE!

YOU MAY HAVE TO GO TO THE DENTIST, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO WATCH NORMAL TV.

WATCH, WEEKNIGHTS AT 7PM AND SUNDAY AT 8PM. ONLY ON MTV.

MTV MUSIC TELEVISION®
REMOTE CONTROL™

"RRRMMPHHH... I WANT MY MTV™!"

IT WAS A HUMID EVENING LIKE ANY OTHER, EXCEPT THAT IT WAS HOT. I WAS WORKING ON A CASE THAT WAS HOT, BUT HAD NOTHING AT ALL TO DO WITH HUMIDITY.
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MTV MUSIC TELEVISION®

TOP 20 VIDEO COUNT DOWN

WATCH TOP 20 VIDEO COUNT DOWN SATURDAY AT 4 PM AND SUNDAY AT 11 AM. ONLY ON MTV.

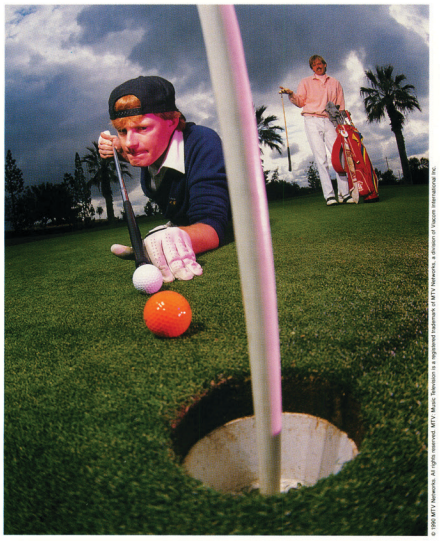
© 1989 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.

Nobody understands them...

Except the cable operator smart enough to give them MTV.

MUSIC TELEVISION

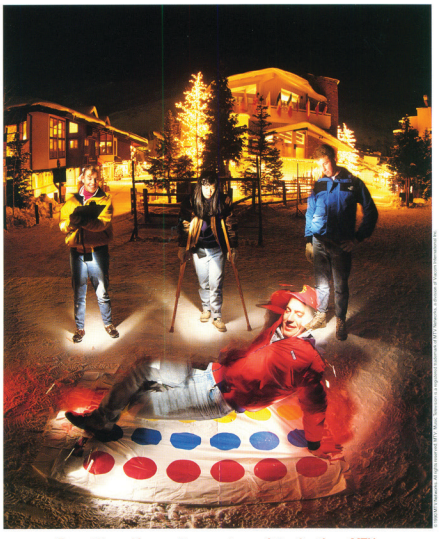
Nobody understands them...



Except the cable operator smart enough to give them MTV.

MUSIC TELEVISION

Nobody understands them...



Except the cable operator smart enough to give them MTV.

MUSIC TELEVISION

Nobody understands them...

© 1989 MTV Networks. All rights reserved. MTV: Music Television is a registered trademark of MTV Networks, a division of Viacom International Inc.

Except the cable operator smart enough to give them MTV.

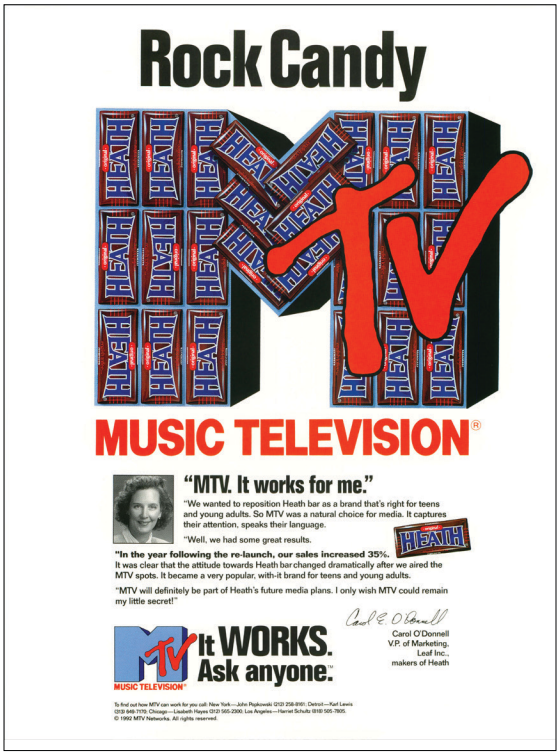
MUSIC TELEVISION®

Photography by Chip Simons

WATCH MTV AND WIN!!!
PLAY anything you want!
MAKE ANY RUDE Noises you want!
SAY Things you've always wanted to say!
(As long as the FCC doesn't mind)
EVERYone will HAVE TO Listen!
BECAUSE it's YOUR RADIO STATION!
MTV is giving AWAY a Radio Station. You could rule the WORLD with WATTS And watts of POWER in Your hands.
Watch MTV NOW For Details!
Find out HOW to WIN your own RADIO STATION...
it's NOT A CONTEST.
It's A CONQUEST.
AND it's ONLY on
MTV music television
MTV music television
MTV's Radio Station Giveaway is subject to all applicable laws, rules and regulations.
© 1990 MTV Networks. All rights reserved. MTV: Music Television is a registered trademark of MTV Networks, a division of Viacom International Inc.
Not here
or here
or here
Here
MTV MUSIC TELEVISION
Nowhere else.

SOLE MUSIC
"MTV. It works for me."
"Reebok had the largest sales increase of any company in the industry last year. One of the major reasons was our partnership with MTV."
Dave Ropes, V.P., Worldwide Advertising, Reebok Inc.
It WORKS. Ask anyone.
HOT NUMBER
"MTV. It works for me."
"Our Video Music Awards cup promotion really drove sales for Taco Bell. It was one of the most successful cup promotions Taco Bell ever did. In only four weeks we sold over twenty million VMA cups."
Ron Snyder, V.P. of Marketing, Taco Bell Inc.
It WORKS. Ask anyone.
MUSICAL SCORE
WAYNE'S WORLD
"MTV. It works for me."
"MTV has really proven itself as an excellent vehicle for selling motion pictures. This is just the beginning of a more comprehensive marketing partnership between Paramount and MTV."
Arthur Cohen, Pres., Worldwide Marketing, Paramount Pictures
It WORKS. Ask anyone.

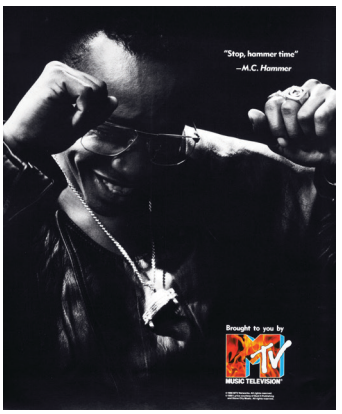
Driving Beat
MUSIC TELEVISION®
"MTV. It works for me."
"Our goal was to attract first time car buyers—18-24 year olds—to our more affordable line of sporty performance cars. So we geared our promotions to college campuses and teamed up with MTV.
"MTV worked with us to develop a comprehensive program to strengthen Dodge's position with young adults. MTV incorporated our 'Think, Don't Drive and Drink' campaign into their own drunk driving campaign, and gave our 'Rockin' Campus Bash' promotion extensive exposure. This really maximized our impact with the college crowd.
"Why? Because nothing else on TV can match the relationship MTV has with youth. MTV has the highest concentration of first time car buyers anywhere on television.
"MTV was very effective in giving Dodge more visibility in the right environment."
Dodge
Martin R. Levine
General Manager,
Dodge Division
It WORKS. Ask anyone.
MUSIC TELEVISION®

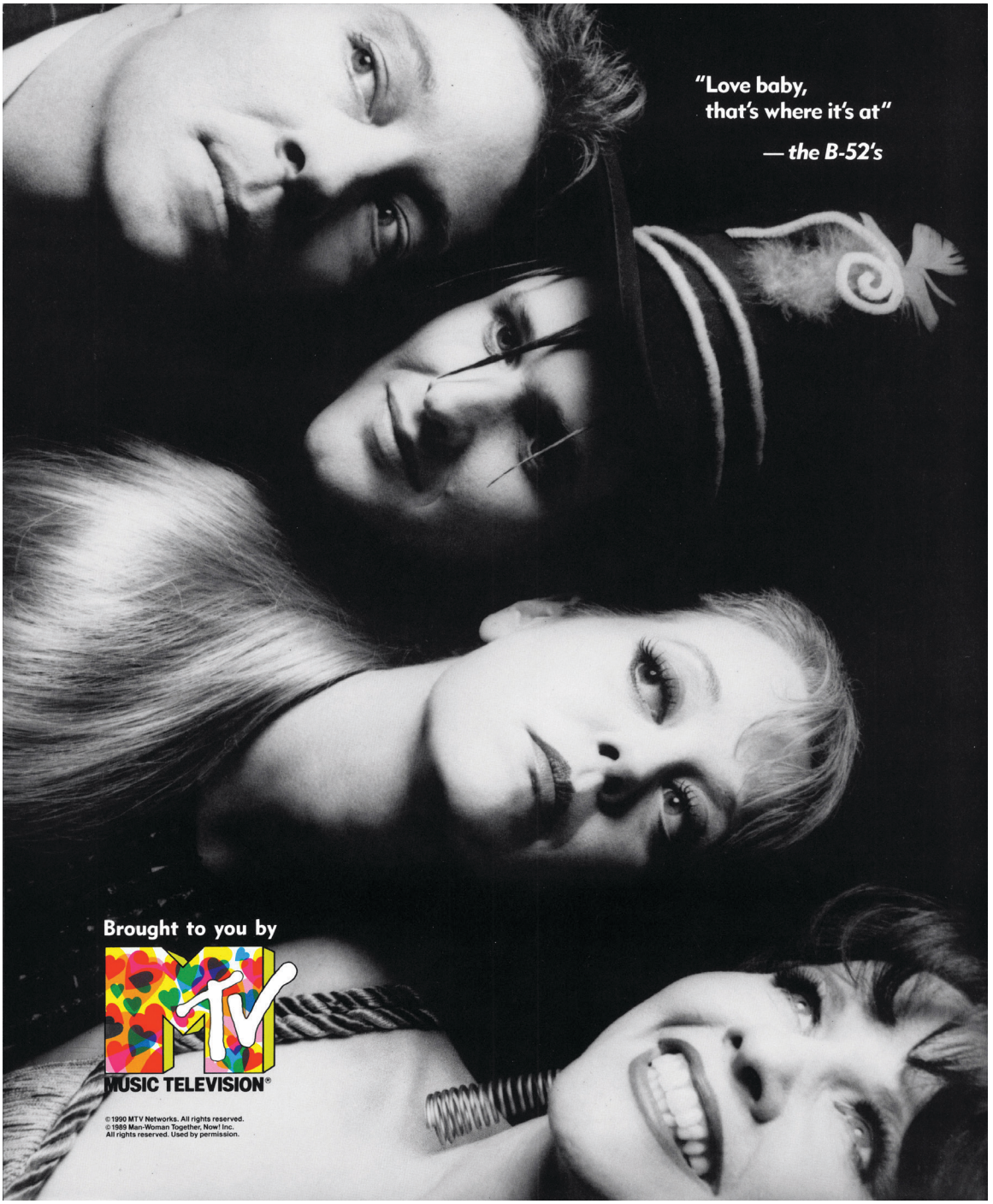

Rock Candy
MUSIC TELEVISION®
"MTV. It works for me."
"We wanted to reposition Heath bar as a brand that's right for teens and young adults. So MTV was a natural choice for media. It captures their attention, speaks their language.
"Well, we had some great results.
"In the year following the re-launch, our sales increased 35%. It was clear that the attitude towards Heath bar changed dramatically after we aired the MTV spots. It became a very popular, with-it brand for teens and young adults.
"MTV will definitely be part of Heath's future media plans. I only wish MTV could remain my little secret!"
HEATH
Carol O'Donnell
V.P. of Marketing,
Leaf Inc.,
makers of Heath
It WORKS. Ask anyone.
MUSIC TELEVISION®

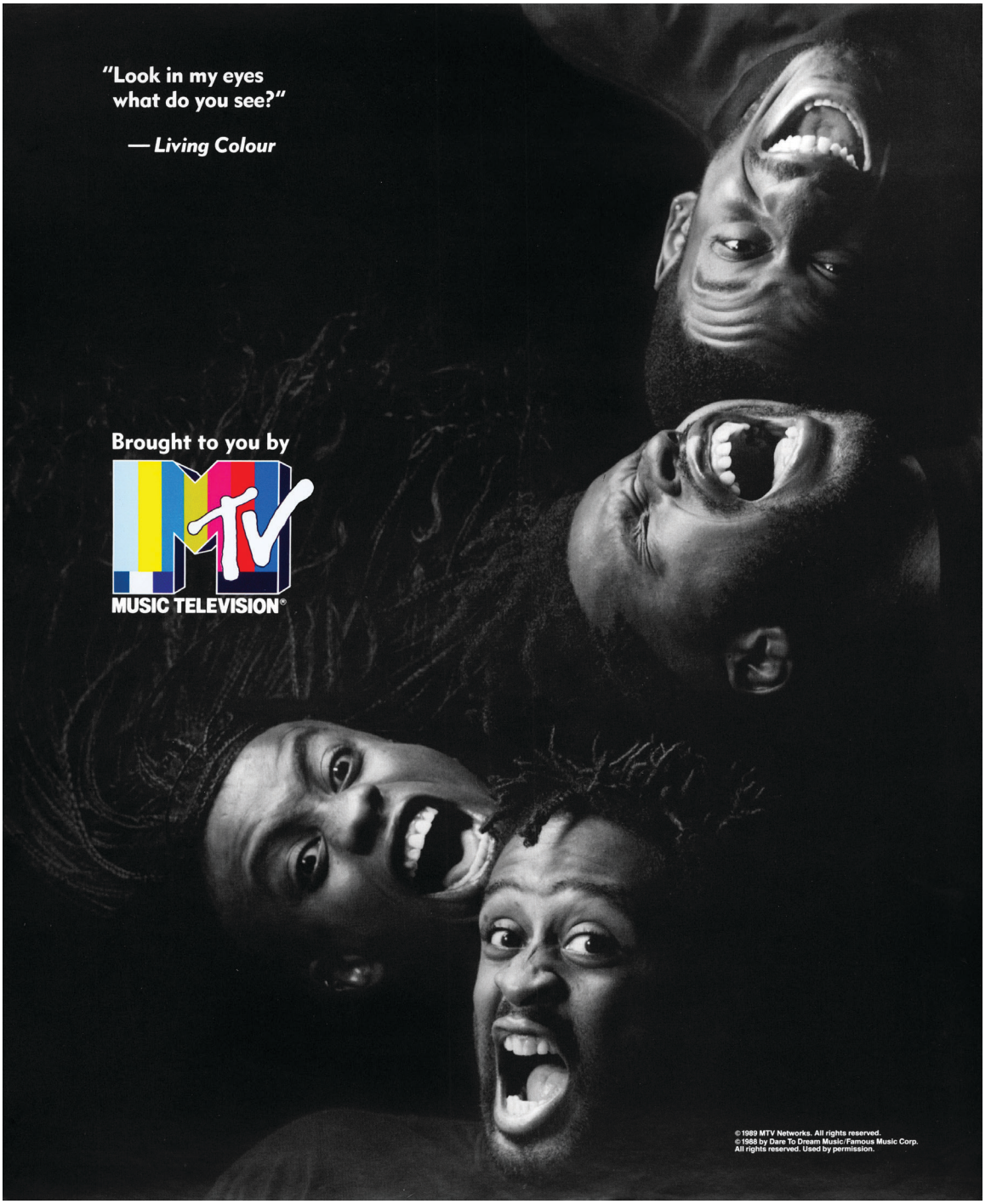
Art direction: Bob Zeltmann

"Hasta la vista, Baby"
— Tone Loc
Brought to you by
MUSIC TELEVISION

"I know that you know,
I've seen your face before
A bad dream, so mean,
rockin' me down
like a slot machine..."
—Winger
Brought to you by
MUSIC TELEVISION


"Stop, hammer time"
–M.C. Hammer
Brought to you by
MUSIC TELEVISION


"Love baby,
that's where it's at"
— the B-52's
Brought to you by
MUSIC TELEVISION®
© 1990 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.
© 1989 Man-Woman Together, Now! Inc.
All rights reserved. Used by permission.


"Look in my eyes
what do you see?"
— Living Colour
Brought to you by
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION®
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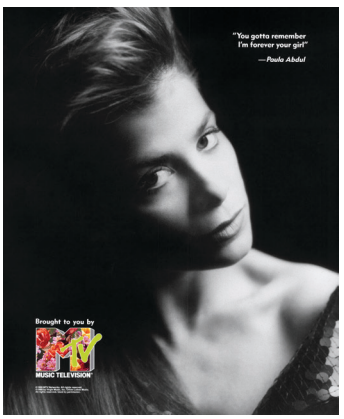

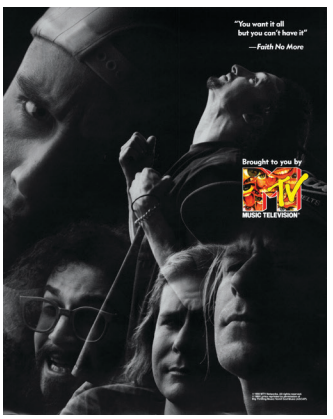

Creative director:
Noel Frankel

Art direction by
Tom Godici

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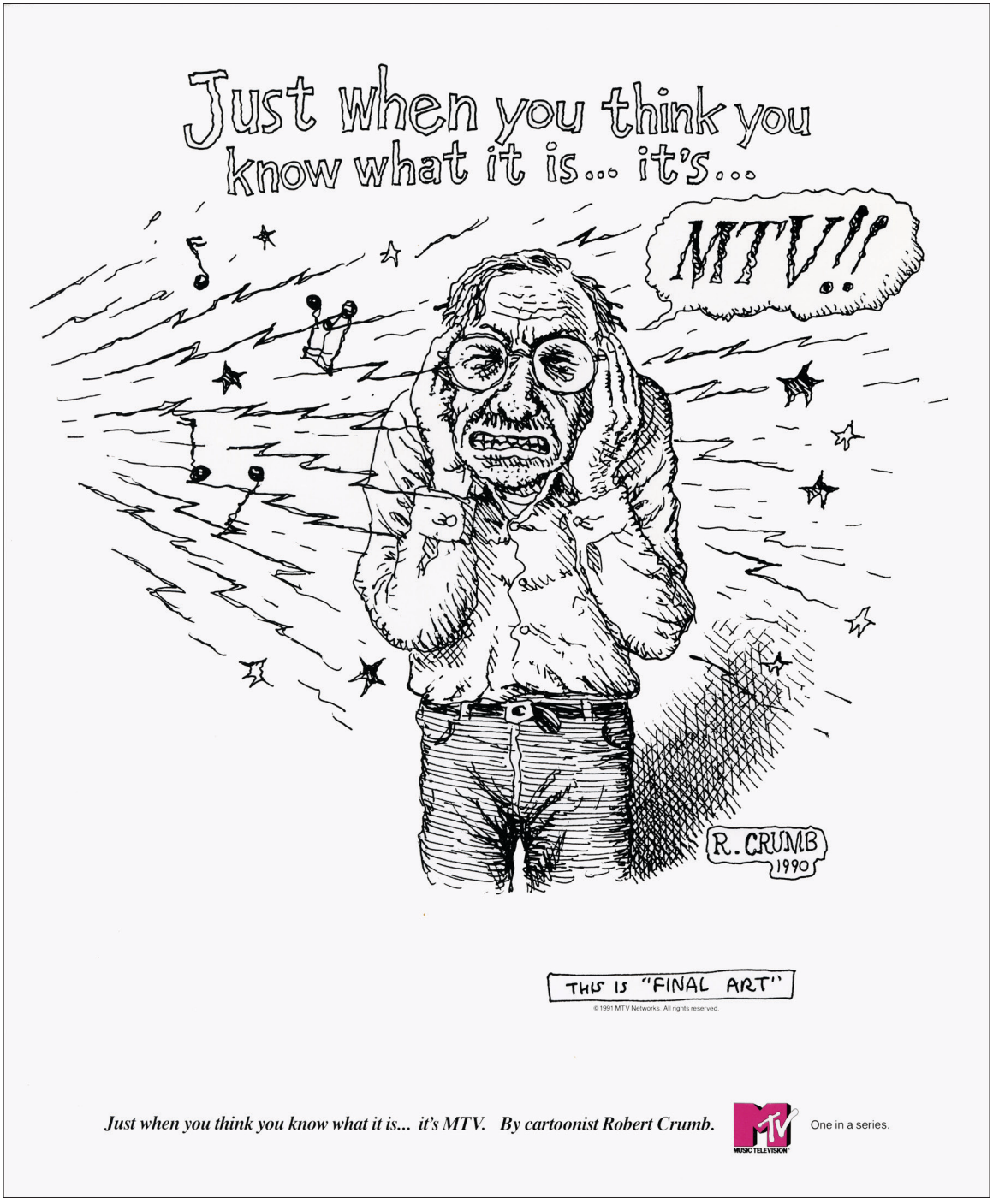
Just when you think you know what it is... it's MTV. By photographer Lisa Powers.
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION
One in a series.

(Pages 102-117) Art direction and design by Tom Godici



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Just when you think you know what it is... it's MTV. By cartoonist Robert Crumb.

MTV MUSIC TELEVISION

One in a series.

Just when you think you know what it is... It's MTV. By artist Robert Yarber.

MTV MUSIC TELEVISION One in a series.

THINK
GREEN
NOT
MEAN
Just when you think you know what it is... it's MTV. By musician/artist Fred Schneider.
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION
One in a series.
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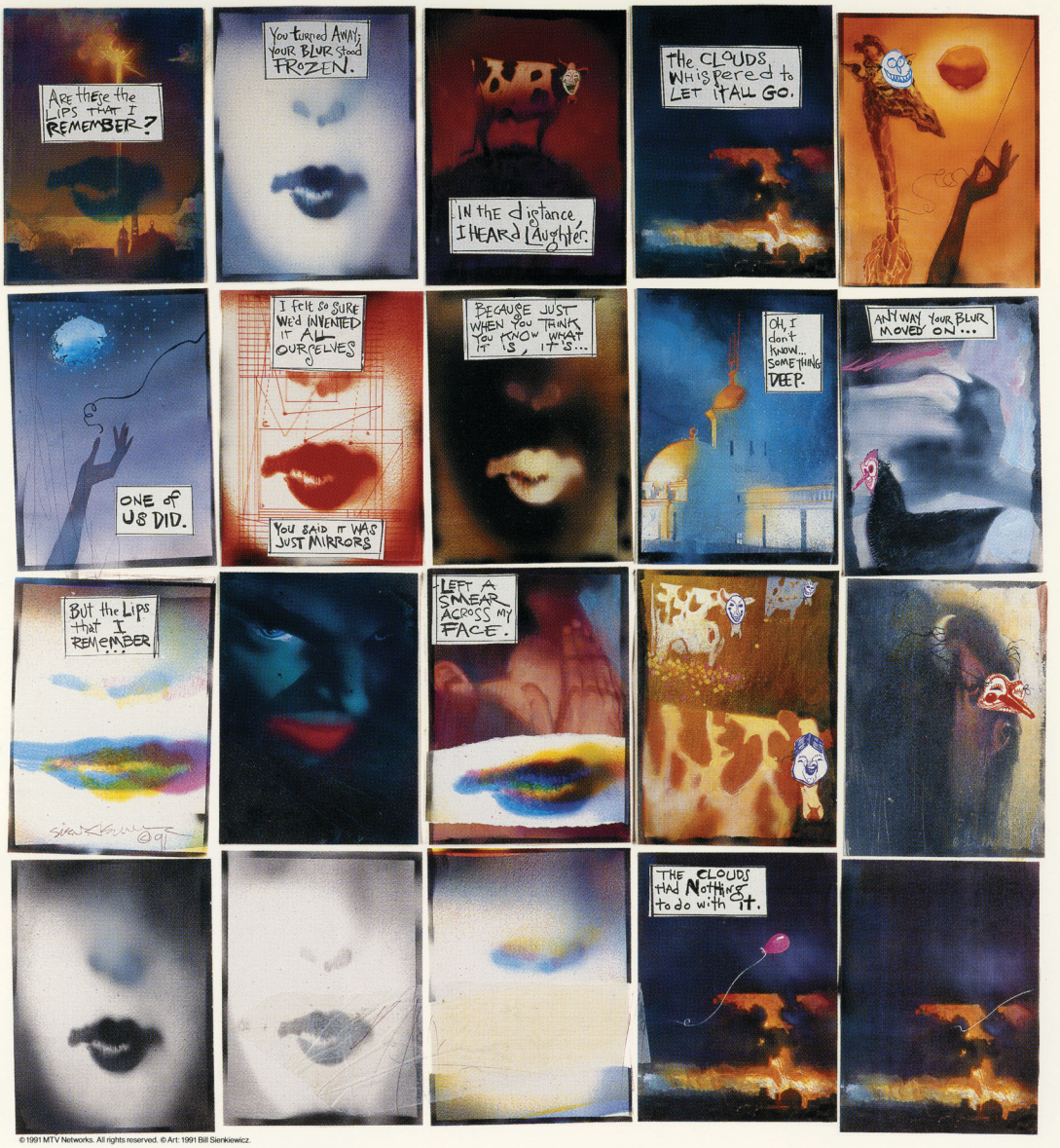
ARE THESE THE LIPS THAT I REMEMBER?
YOU TURNED AWAY; YOUR BLUR STOOD FROZEN.
IN THE DISTANCE I HEARD LAUGHTER.
THE CLOUDS WHISPERED TO LET IT ALL GO.
ONE OF US DID.
I FELT SO SURE WE'D INVENTED IT ALL OURSELVES
YOU SAID IT WAS JUST MIRRORS
BECAUSE JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS, IT'S...
OH, I DON'T KNOW... SOMETHING DEEP.
ANYWAY YOUR BLUR MOVED ON...
BUT THE LIPS THAT I REMEMBER...
LEFT A SMEAR ACROSS MY FACE.
THE CLOUDS HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

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Just when you think you know what it is…it's MTV. By artist Bill Sienkiewicz. MTV MUSIC TELEVISION One in a series.

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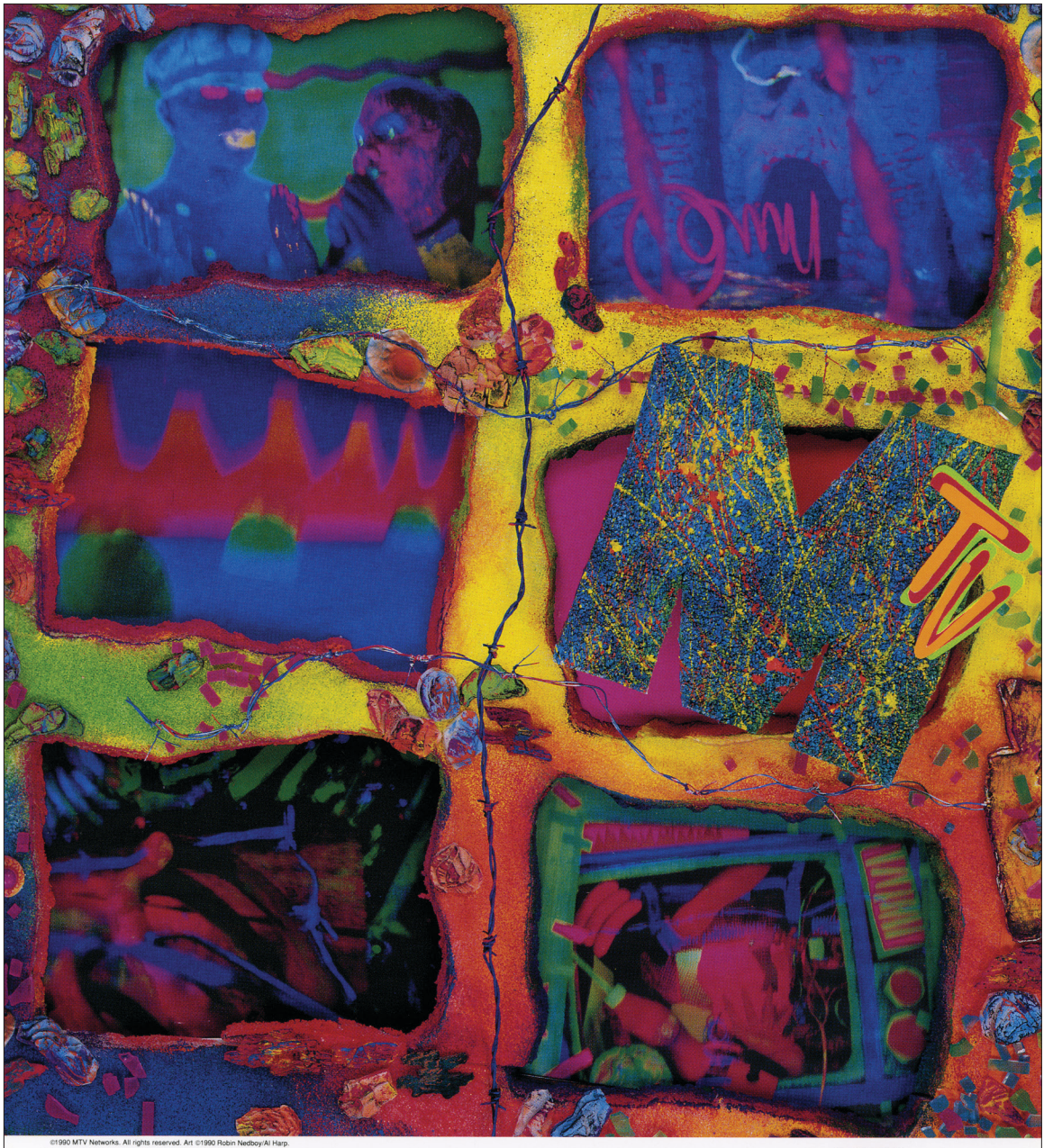
Just when you think you know what it is... it's MTV. By photographer Mary Ellen Mark.
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION
One in a series.



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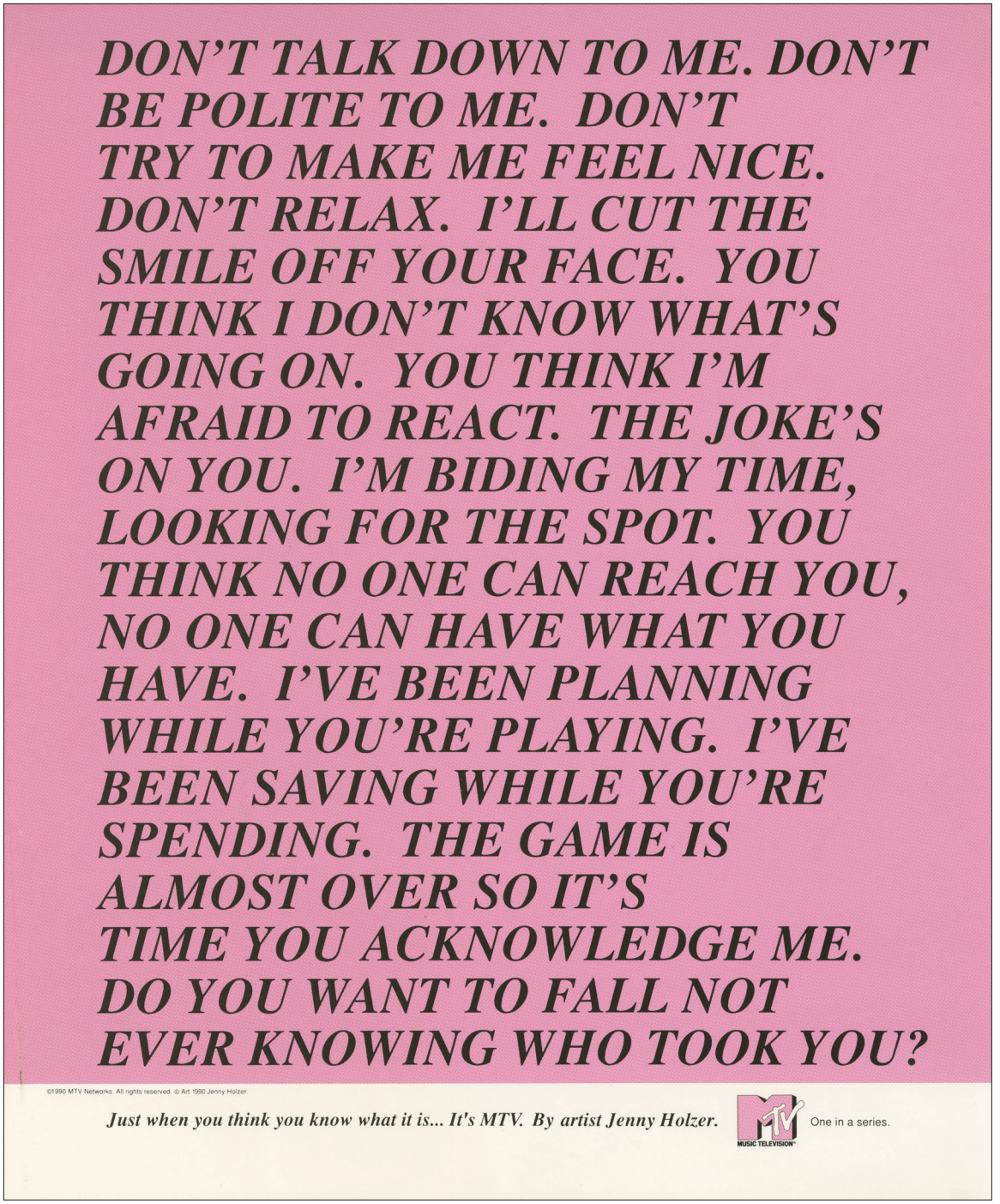
Just when you think you know what it is... It's MTV. By photographers Robin Nedboy/Al Harp.

MTV MUSIC TELEVISION One in a series.


DON'T TALK DOWN TO ME. DON'T BE POLITE TO ME. DON'T TRY TO MAKE ME FEEL NICE. DON'T RELAX. I'LL CUT THE SMILE OFF YOUR FACE. YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON. YOU THINK I'M AFRAID TO REACT. THE JOKE'S ON YOU. I'M BIDING MY TIME, LOOKING FOR THE SPOT. YOU THINK NO ONE CAN REACH YOU, NO ONE CAN HAVE WHAT YOU HAVE. I'VE BEEN PLANNING WHILE YOU'RE PLAYING. I'VE BEEN SAVING WHILE YOU'RE SPENDING. THE GAME IS ALMOST OVER SO IT'S TIME YOU ACKNOWLEDGE ME. DO YOU WANT TO FALL NOT EVER KNOWING WHO TOOK YOU?
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Just when you think you know what it is... It's MTV. By artist Jenny Holzer.
MTV MUSIC TELEVISION
One in a series.

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Just when you think you know what it is... It's MTV. By illustrator Gene Greif.

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Just when you think you know what it is... It's MTV. By illustrator Lou Brooks.

MTV MUSIC TELEVISION

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Just when you think you know what it is... It's MTV. By illustrator Janet Woolley.

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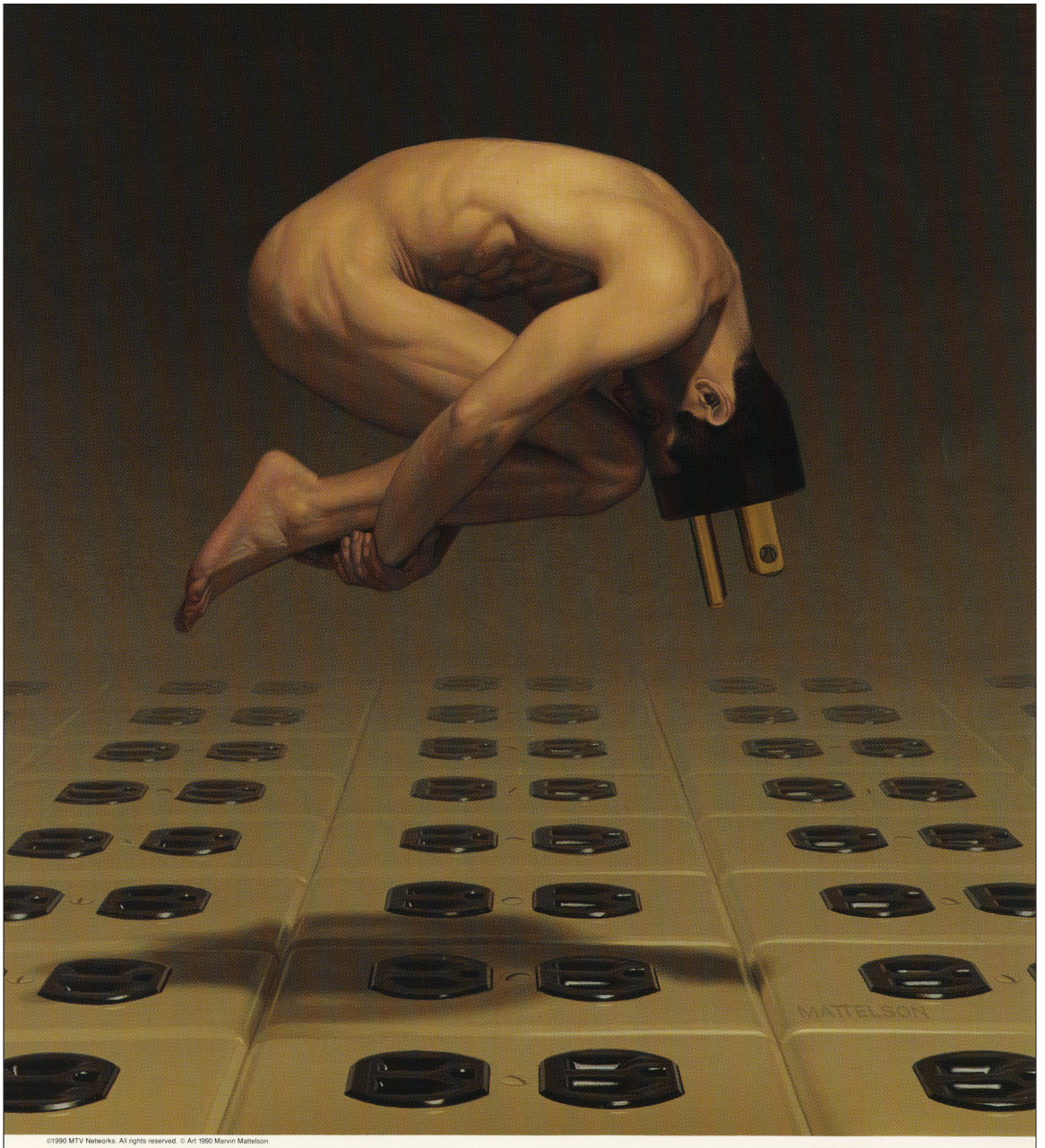
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION
One in a series.

JUST WHEN YOU KNOW YOU THINK WHAT IT IS?
MAN MADE SPACE & WORLD
JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS
JUST-WHEN-YOU THINK-YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS?
MY BRAIN IS COMPUTERISED DIRECT FROM GOD AND GUIDES MY PAINTBRUSH TO DO 20,000,013 WORKS OF ART SINCE 1976.
CITY OF FROZEN IN VISIONS OF OTHER WORLDS BY HOWARD FINSTER FROM GOD 20,000,013 WORKS

Just when you think you know what it is... It's MTV By artist Howard Finster. MTV One in a series.



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Just when you think you know what it is... It's MTV. By illustrator Marvin Mattelson.

MTV MUSIC TELEVISION

One in a series.

Did you do it for love? Did you do it for money? Did you think you had to, honey?*

Tom Godici's name pops up quite a bit throughout this book. But, as a talented, skilled and ambitious designer, director and art director. Definitely, not as the actor he is on the opposite page. >>>

Somewhere along the way in the run up to some MTV promos (and eventually, TV Guide 'tune-in' ads) conceived and directed by creative director Noel Frankel and art directed by Tom, he actually ended up in the spots.

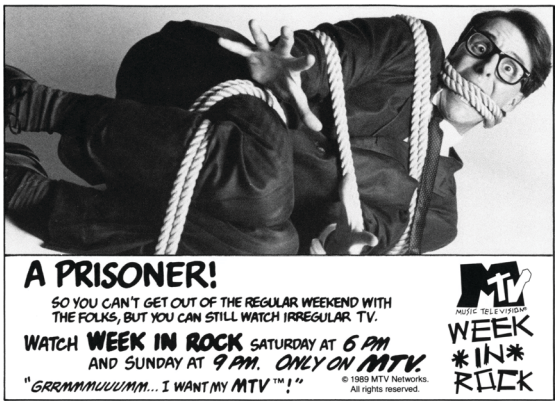
We've been guilty about it ever since.

Tom never did anything halfway, his dedication to his work is 100%. So, it couldn't occur to him –or any of us, for that matter– that spending a day struggling as a trussed and bound actor would affect his teeth for the rest of his life.

We're sorry Tom. Sincerely.

MTV Promises: "The Gagged Man"
Directed by Noel Frankel
Writers: Noel Frankel & Steve Diamond
Art director & actor: Tom Godici
Producer: Chris Strand
Chauncey Street Productions

*"The Long Run"
By Don Henley & Glenn Frey


A PRISONER!
SO YOU CAN'T GET OUT OF THE REGULAR WEEKEND WITH THE FOLKS, BUT YOU CAN STILL WATCH IRREGULAR TV.
WATCH WEEK IN ROCK SATURDAY AT 6 PM AND SUNDAY AT 9 PM. ONLY ON MTV.
"GRRMMMUUUMM... I WANT MY MTV™!"
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MTV MUSIC TELEVISION
WEEK *IN* ROCK

We started Fred/Alan with a contract to produce –with our friend Buzz Potamkin– our first television series for the Playboy Channel.

Music videos were the rage, we were the only MTV "stars" in the open market, and we knew there were many pop artists who were making videos that were being censored for nudity. Perfect for Playboy.

But, they weren't nude enough for Playboy, and without our permission they edited the videos in inappropriate ways. We dropped out after a couple of episodes, but they'd breached our contract. The payout funded our first year in business.

1983
PLAYBOY CHANNEL

"Playboy's Hot Rocks"
Series produced by
Fred/Alan
& Buzzco

Animation by Buzzco
Directed and illustrated by Candy Kugel

In the aftermath of the debacle with The Playboy Channel and their illegal editing of music videos, the next year was attempting to get some more television shows on the air.

We got ourselves a couple of agents. Right? Isn't that what you do in show business? And because we were the only free agents who'd had a primary role in the hot, hot, hot media story of the early 1980s –MTV, natch!– the agents got us a "first look" deal at the ABC Networks daytime division.

"Daytime" was primarily soap operas and talk shows, and little did we know, some variety shows were in their bailiwick too.

Variety? Music, right? That's us!

We came up with a concept that was kind of Ed Sullivan like, but with rock'n'roll. We thought Ringo Starr would be a fabulous host. Ringo's Rock Riot! We traveled up to meet Ringo at a Boston hotel. It wasn't his best period –"personal problems" the tabloids might say– but his public persona proved to be accurate. He was a nice guy.

But, Ringo turned us down.

...

Alan: I remember two interactions with Ringo — The first was on a phone call to discuss the budget. Ringo had a photographic memory and when we were on the phone he wanted details about the show budget he had read weeks earlier. The other was when I ran into him at some thing years later and mentioned Ringo's Rock Riot.

He didn't exactly roll his eyes, but whatever he did do with his face, I interpreted it as that....

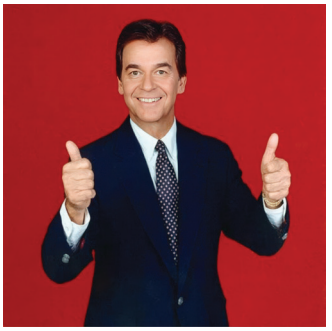
Then, ABC told us that no music show was ever produced at their network without Dick Clark producing. You know, "American Bandstand," "Where the Action Is," huge, influential shows. We were shocked when Dick offered to partner with us on our venture. He was the most successful independent producer in network television and we just thought of ourselves as two kids from the suburbs having a good time. Dick knew better, he wasn't about to shine on two of the architects of the most talked about entertainment franchise of the decade.

ABC drove us all crazy. Could you change the show to be this? Could you adapt it to be that? Along with Dick, we kept writing up new pages for each request, and they turned down each one in turn.

...

Alan: I have four memories of Dick Clark. 1) He wore a gorgeous watch with two dials, one set to West Coast and one to East Coast. 2) He called me once from his car to talk about the pitch. Me. Talking to Dick Clark. Who called from the car! (There weren't cell phones yet). 3) As we sat in the conference room at ABC in LA, waiting for the network exec to come in for the final meeting, it dawned on me that there was I with

my 3-page treatment in front of me, and there was Dick Clark with the same 3-page treatment in front of him, and I thought, “Oh shit, this is the rest of my life. Three pieces of paper in an airless room trying to get a nitwit executive to greenlight my show.” 4) After yet another meeting with this wishy washy exec we’d been pitching for over a year, who contacted us to do a show and couldn’t decide if she wanted it or not, Clark said, “Well, maybe by Friday we could have a yes or a no, and we can all get on with our lives.”



...

One day, in frustration, Alan asked Dick, "Is this what it's like for you? Do they do this to you too?" Dick told us, don't worry kids, it happens all the time.

"The only thing they haven't asked us to do was turn it into a quiz show!" Alan burst out.

Next –and last– network meeting:

"Do you guys think it could be a quiz show?"

Needless to say, we got the Hollywood no... which is never a no. You just never get a callback.

...

So, the world didn't seem to want TV shows from Fred/Alan. We needed a reinvention, fast.

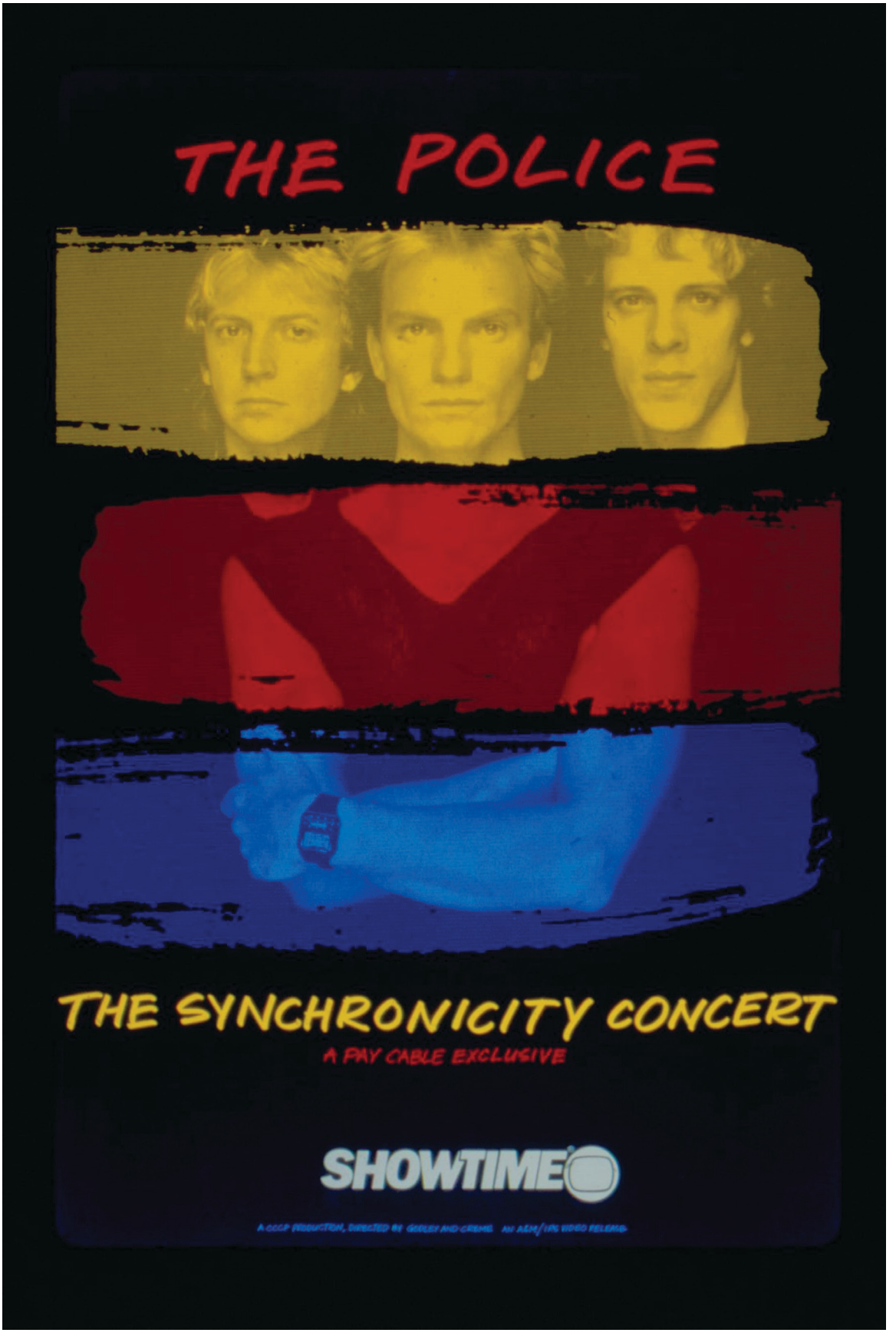
Maybe network branding and promotion?

Our first year, Fred/Alan, Inc. was essentially Fred, Alan and Gilbert Hsiao, our college friend who worked with us at MTV Networks and came along for the entrepreneurial ride.

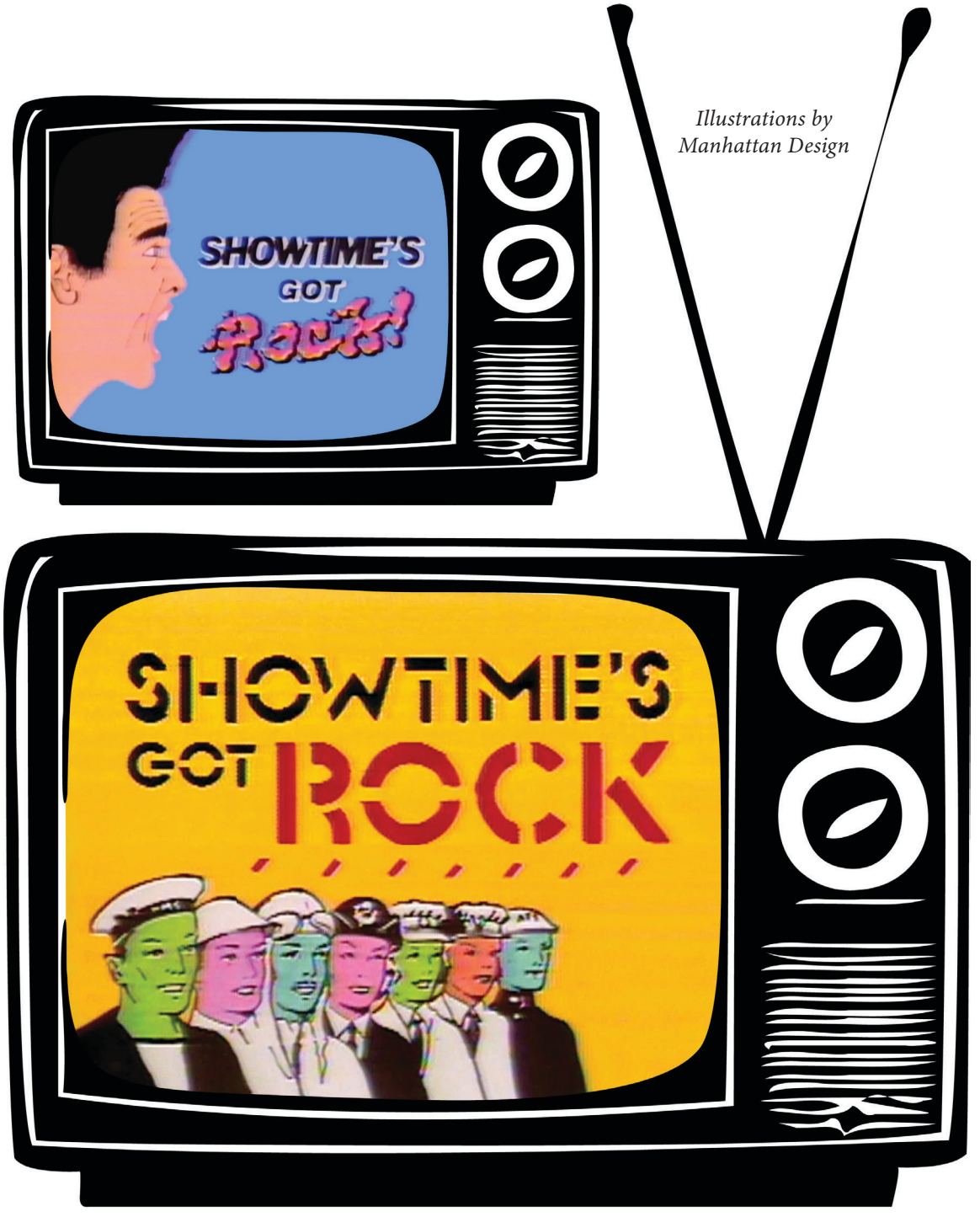
When the Playboy Channel series came to an end and there were no other shows on the horizon, we started producing short form projects to tap into the ongoing expansion of the 1980s cable boom. Soon enough, we needed help. At first, freelancers bridged the gap. Our design friends at Manhattan Design and Corey & Co., Boston, played a pivotal role in filling the void.

Before long, producer Linda Schaffer became Fred/Alan's first creative employee, where she took the lead on dozens of projects, particularly at Showtime and The Movie Channel. When the rebuilding and rebranding of Nickelodeon came around, Tom Pomposello stepped in to handle all our music production and network identification animation.

Our original, cost-efficient office at the top of the Sheraton Park Central Hotel on Manhattan's 7th Avenue served us well for five years. But as we expanded into advertising agency duties alongside our branding and production responsibilities –and launched Chauncey Street Productions with Albie Hecht– we not only grew the team but also relocated three blocks north to a more spacious –and not for nothing, nicer– location.



Poster design by Mark Larson



Illustrations by
Manhattan Design

SHOWTIME

1984-1992

The **Showtime** subscription channel was the Fred/Alan client with the most longevity after MTV Networks. Josh Sapan, head of marketing (one of our best clients ever and, eventually the CEO of AMC Networks) was a guy who let us stretch ourselves beyond our reputation as media brand gurus. But, at first, it wasn't easy.

Music video. Our blessing and curse. Despite our Playboy Channel fiasco, our goal was to produce TV shows. In the meantime, to keep ourselves and our co-workers paid, we had to fall back on the work for which we were known. So, our backup was going to be the branding and marketing stuff we could do in our sleep.

But, we didn't want to fall into the music video trap. First of all, we didn't want to be typecast. And second, we didn't really make music videos (though we eventually did two in our decade), and even if we did, they didn't pay too well.

So, we were hesitant when Showtime wanted us to help them promote their jump-on-the-bandwagon music video show. Aside from the fact that it was hard to say why theirs would be any good, we could see the trap ahead.

We told Josh we'd agree to take the gig. If. If we could get a non-music project.

"Absolutely!"

We did "Showtime's Got Rock!!! (*the previous page*), it went over well, and we waited for our next assignment.

"We've got the rights to [Apple co-founder] Steve Wozniak's US Festival! Can you help us?"

We dutifully did the job, which was a latter day, not so successful, Woodstock with all the music acts you could imagine. This time it involved a direct response approach to lure new subscribers. Piece of cake, and Showtime was impressed we could do something strategic rather than just a rock promo. We waited for our non-music assignment.

"Debbie wins Barry Manilow's piano!"
Produced by Linda Schaffer

"Absolutely!"

When Josh asked us to promote a Barry Manilow concert (really?!) we put our foot down and refused until we had prebooked a non-music job. After a bit of hesitation, it was done. Another direct response gig, which was great, because if we did it right Showtime made more money, which would guarantee a bunch of future work. Which it did for the next decade. And, not for nothing, from then on we were fine doing their other music projects over the years. (*See the Police poster on the previous spread.*)

Sometimes we were amazed by

the kind of work we were allowed to do at Showtime. But that's the way it sometimes is when one is in at the beginning of something bigger than one imagined.

But our all time favorite job for Showtime had to be *The Honeymooners: Lost Episodes. (The following two pages.)* Americans of a certain age have a great feeling about Jackie Gleason's *Honeymooners.* The catch phrases ("To the moooooonnnn Alice!!!"), blue collar everyman families in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, the cold water flats, and of course, the indelible characters, made it a must watch show for the whole family, as TV used to bill itself.

So, when actor/writer Jackie Gleason dusted off dozens of kinescoped comedy sketches done over the years, Showtime stepped up and presented them towards the end of 1984. They asked Fred/Alan, who, yes, had done some nice work for Showtime, to help out. Nice work, for sure, but we also –truly!!!– had our offices in Gleason's old New York *Honeymooners* production offices.

Fred/Alan put a total New Yawk team to promote the series. Steve Stein aka Steinski from lower Manhattan was a friend and collaborator with our go-to sound engineer, Queens born Doug DeFranco (Double Dee). Aside from being an early hip-hop, white "mastermix" champ, in those days Steve made his living writing advertising. He loved music as much as we did, but also understood the art of persuasion.

Eugene Pitt was the leader of The Jive Five, a local quintet of doo-wop/soul singers who'd had a few hit records. He was also a smart composer and had done a nice a cappella job for us on a couple of spots for the Playboy Channel, so we thought we'd try again with Brooklyn's own *Honeymooners.* (The Jive Five went on to the biggest fame in their careers later that year when we convinced Nick programmers that these folks needed to be the "sound of Nickelodeon." Another creative coup for us, and mostly for them.)

At *FredAlan.org* the first couple of spots will ring in your ears. What you'll hear, and what we heard too, was a wonderful song that Eugene and Steve did for Jackie and Showtime. And like we suggested up top, the fact that Josh let us use five virtually unknown doo-wop singers who composed their own celebration of a 25 year old, black & white sitcom, says something special. At least it did –and does!– mean something to us.

.....

The Honeymooners: Lost Episodes 1984
Client: Josh Sapan/Showtime

Agency: Fred/Alan, Inc. New York
Creative directors:
Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert
Producer, copywriter & sound design:
Steve Stein
Music composition: Eugene Pitt & Steve Stein
Vocals: The Jive Five

SHOWTIME

Absolutely
NO GAMBLING

The
Honeymooners-
The Lost
Episodes

SHOWTIME

THE FUNNIEST PERSON IN AMERICA

Our friend Herb Scannell was marketing director at Showtime (soon to become CEO of Nickelodeon) and asked us to help out with their latest national promotion that could get some good headlines. He writes more about it:

Ha! No better way to start this description than with the word "HA!" as it was the marketing department (programming kept their distance) at Showtime's effort to find funny in America and designate 50 state winners and an overall "Funniest Person in America".

It was Josh Sapan's –VP of marketing– pet project, and it was like him – unconventional, with a goal of generating local and national press, and against the grain of traditional pay TV marketing that was about subscriber acquisition (they weren't wrong). I came to Showtime with the furniture when they acquired The Movie Channel (we'll keep Scannell, we have enough file cabinets). I liked it and Josh, looking for someone to champion it, put me in charge. Fred/Alan did the Uncle Sam with a pie and "I WANT YOU!" message/branding on posters and TV spots. It was also the inspiration for the "prize" for the 50 state winners, a white plaster big arm with a pie in hand and your name on it. (Yes, the key was to enter from Wyoming, the Dakotas and other less populated states where if you entered, you won).

The grand prize wasn't a comedy special (Programming wanted little or nothing to do with it) and instead the prize was appearing in "interstitials" between movies on Showtime while driving across America in an RV with Groucho nose and glasses. Not a dignified look. Eventually Showtime crowned Ellen DeGeneres, and entrant from New Orleans, as America's Funnist Person. Five years later, she became the hottest thing in Hollywood, with a sitcom and later talk show.

So, the marketing weasels won and picked a real winner!

.....

Client: Showtime
Herb Scannell/Josh Sapan
Writer/director: Alan Goodman

SHOWTIME ASKS:
ARE YOU THE
FUNNIEST PERSON
IN AMERICA?
SHOWTIME
PAY TV
Excitement

The key to good health is fiber.
Don't you want to be spry like me?
Ha ha!
But here's a healthy offer.
Showtime has exclusive movies and shows.
Like Witness and Death Wish 3.
Without Showtime, you can't watch them.
And if I'm lying, I'm buying!
Free cable for a year if you spot Showtime's Exclusives on HBO or Cinemax!

Plus raisin bran.
Couple of boxes are open.
I like raisins!

Larry "Bud" Melman, a character played by actor/comedian Calvin DeForest, became a cult star with regular 1980s appearances on NBC's *Late Night with David Letterman.* Alan thought he'd be the perfect spokesman, as his always imperfect self, for a promotion:

"The Showtime Promise: Free cable."

And, as if free cable and exclusive movies weren't enough for you, Larry Bud had a great deal for you...

Client: Showtime/Josh Sapan
Writer/director: Alan Goodman
Producer: Steve Shepard
Executive producer: Linda Schaffer

Nickelodeon, the trojan horse

Nickelodeon before MTV Networks and before Fred/Alan

April 1, 1979 –
Nickelodeon launches, commercial free, on Warner Cable Communications

December 1979 –
Still commercial free, Nickelodeon becomes part of Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment, alongside The Movie Channel, and distributes on nationwide, American cable systems

January 1984 –
Nickelodeon becomes ad supported

.....

Dr. Vivian Horner was hired by Warner Communications' interactive television experiment QUBE, because she wassome-one with experience as the director of research on the PBS show "The Electric Company." She soon developed an entire children's channel with licensed pro-grams, originally called "Pinwheel" after its only original series, eventually named "Nickelodeon." No one seems to know why kids' entertainment would be named after a 50+ year, outdated term, using a mime as its logo. Such is media history.

In 1979, Warner partnered with American Express to expand their cable systems across the United States, taking advantage of the opportunities presented by the low-er costs of satellite distribution (Amex felt that cable technology would spur interac-tive shopping; they were off by about four decades).

HBO's success in subscription TV started a gold rush, and the newly christened Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment Company (WASEC) wanted in. They renamed their experimental QUBE's Star Channel as The Movie Channel and felt that the commercial free Nickelodeon was their ticket to getting a piece of the future (they were off by 50 years).

Nick's reason for existence... In those days, cable companies sent their sales folk door to door, carrying loose leaf binders to show homeowners their channel offerings like ESPN, Showtime, TBS SuperStation. WASEC's hope was that by opening their pitch with "we've got this seven day a week children's channel with no commercials!" would allow them entry into the house where they could be upsold to their subscription offering of The Movie Channel.

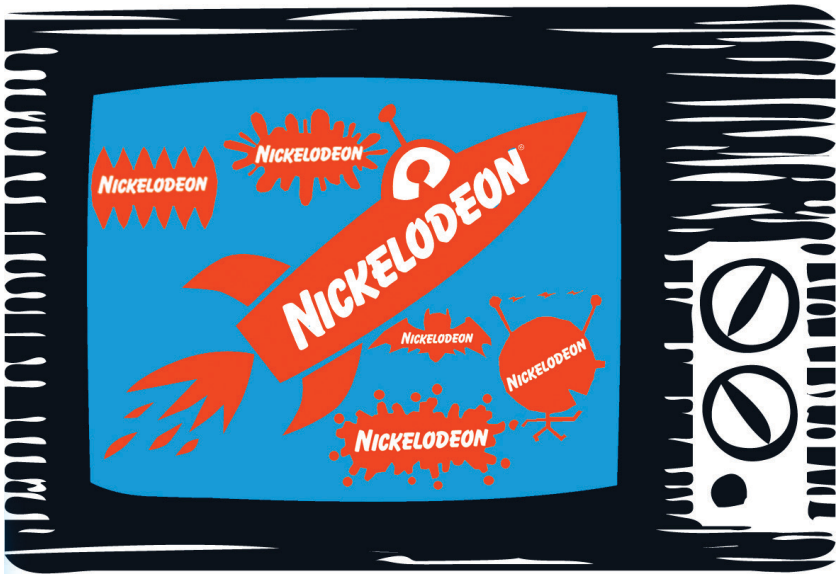
The effort stumbled and Showtime bought The Movie Channel in late 1983, and kickstarted some seismic changes. Bob Pittman, MTV Networks' successful leader, added Nick to his portfolio. He dismissed the miscast leader, Cy Schneider, who was more comfortable trying to copy the Disney Channel than coming up with anything original.

Bob promoted staffer Gerry Laybourne to run the place and contracted with Fred/Alan, telling all that would listen that unless Nickelodeon found some viewers he would be forced to shutter the channel. Luckily, we all took him seriously.

1999, Vivian Horner: "[Gerry] really understands what kids want: Her Nickel-odeon has an attitude. I'm not sure if I could have made Nickelodeon such a big hit."

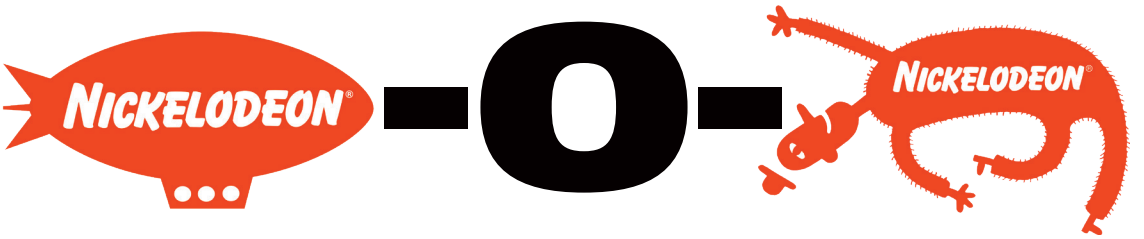
1979: The Nickelodeon mime.

1981: The "silver ball." Developed by Klein &, Beverly Hills.



1984-2009: The Nickelodeon logo, developed by Fred/Alan, designed by Tom Corey & Scott Nash, Corey & Co., Boston

ORANGE you glad you've got your NICK-EL



DE-ON?

Nickelodeon was the worst rated cable network in 1984's lineup of 30 channels. Fred/Alan's first big assignment was to fix that problem. And, from our very first meeting we realized that actually reinventing the presentation of the entire channel was the solution.

Success! Nickelodeon went from worst to first. Six months after we came aboard, Nickelodeon was the #1 cable network, where it stayed for 25 years.

1984 -1992

About a year after we launched our company, Bob Pittman called us over and asked us to work on Nickelodeon. Only one show –"You Can't Do That on Television"– got any viewers everyday, and "Mr.Wizard's World," a science show, got a few kids once a week. All the others? Bupkis. Nothing. "Hash marks," in Nielsen's vocabulary.

Something had to change or MTV Networks, Nick's parent, would shut down the channel. *(continued)*

Like all the other hipsters at MTV Networks, we'd pretty much ignored Nickelodeon. And, it turned

out, so did most of the kids in America. Nickelodeon had lost almost $40 million since its launch in 1979 (that's over $100 million at the time of this book's publication) and needed to figure out how to turn things around.

Nick's business model had begun as a non-commercial "door opener" for the company's cash cow, The Movie Channel subscription network. When TMC didn't work and was sold to Showtime, Nick had to put up or shut up and it was decided that it needed advertisers. Here was the fundamental challenge. Even though channel head Gerry Laybourne and her chief programming executive Debby Beece had researched every show thoroughly and reported back that kids loved them, it hadn't translated into much viewership. And while 44% of the country tuned in at least once a week, they stayed for less than six minutes. "It's for babies," said children of every age.

We weren't particularly interested in the job. We didn't attach much importance to kids television and at the time neither of us had probably even contemplated having children. But, we needed the work. Fred/Alan got down to business.

The math was pretty simple. If we could lift that six minutes a week even just a little bit, the ratings would follow. We needed to accept Gerry's and Debby's assessment of the quality of their shows. What did we know about what kids liked?

For us, even a cursory look at the network exposed its core weakness. There was no structure or heft to the channel's promotional efforts, the most efficient way to attract viewers and hold them for a few more minutes. Pittman had given us the bad news when he hired us. Programming budget? Zero. Marketing budget? Zero. And the creative approach to promotion? Basically, watered down, poorly executed versions of broadcast network promos. An attempt to convince kids to watch dozens of shows they'd never heard of on a channel they all thought were "for babies."

Obviously, a rethinking was necessary.

For the first several years, MTV had no traditional television programs (we were more than thrilled to program music videos 24 hours a day) and so, no predictable schedule to promote. We figured out that promoting MTV itself was the key. If our viewers loved MTV, they'd give new music a chance. The program services group had developed a systematic approach to making promises to viewers without cheesy slogans. We used plain English -- "We're the world's first video music channel," "We play your favorite music," "New music too" -- and illustrated those simple ideas with an endless barrage of startling visuals. Our staff was young, with no promotional experience and a limited practical knowledge of television. But they were creative, and the work was exciting.

Fixing Nickelodeon would take the same approach. We were simultaneously working on two tracks: the branding and promotional strategies, and then the creative solutions.

Tom Corey and Scott Nash were Boston based graphic designers, among the few who immediately liked our TV-needs-lo-

gos-that-changes approach. Fred almost blew it when they presented five designs and picked a traditional "fixed" logo. But Alan swept it aside for an idea that was the polar opposite of what we'd done with MTV.

The Nickelodeon logo would be one color only –"orange is a color that doesn't often appear in nature, it'll stand out against almost anything," said Corey & Co– and a never changing, white logotype. The change element would be shapes, dozens, hundreds of them. *(Pages 140-167)* At first, Nickelodeon was hesitant. "How come MTV gets all the colors and we get only one?" But, we used all our persuasive powers to get it over the finish line. If the idea was something risky, it just might be the right one to make an impression.

Alan got together with programming scheduler Dee LaDuke and completely revamped the network 18-page promo guide (all the shows were acquired from various international producers and had differnt formats). They reorganized every program to make room for two 10-second network identifications and four 30-second promotional spots.

That's what set up the pattern that we'd get the first and last spots in every break, something that would lead to arguments with the ad sales team for the rest of eternity (they always wanted to sell –at a premium– the spots adjacent to programming. If we used them right, it would amount to $25 million of annual network promotion ($75 million today). So much for the zero'd out marketing budget. Network management saw that well executed, wildly creative promos, exclusively based on our to-be-invented promises, rotated through those 20,000+ slots, would uplift the viewers to fall in love with Nickelodeon.

Help the audience fall in love, and everything else becomes easier.

Together with the Nick executives we invented these promises:

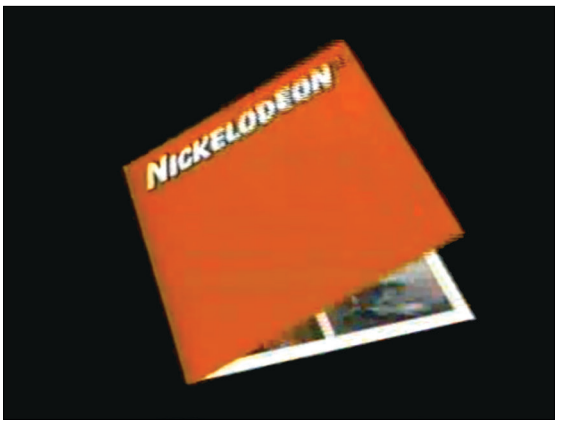
Nickelodeon:

- The first kids network.
- The only channel for you.
- It's what you want.
- Everyday.
- Only kids win at Nickelodeon.

Would all these ideas actually work?

Scott Webb, our former colleague at The Movie Channel, would be the test. We knew there was a shared creative sensibility with Scott, who was a brilliant young man who was not only a comic book collector but had also trained with Dale Pon, Fred's mentor and future "I Want My MTV!" guru.

Scott scored big time with his first spot, "Everyday Hero," which mixed a sequential frame format with, can you guess? The 'Everyday' promise. (*Pages138 & 139*) From the first time the Nick powers saw and heard the spot ("Isn't the voice over awfully fast?" "No." They believed us.) they knew we'd found the future of Nickelodeon.


NICKELODEON

BOOM

Mr. WIZARD'S World

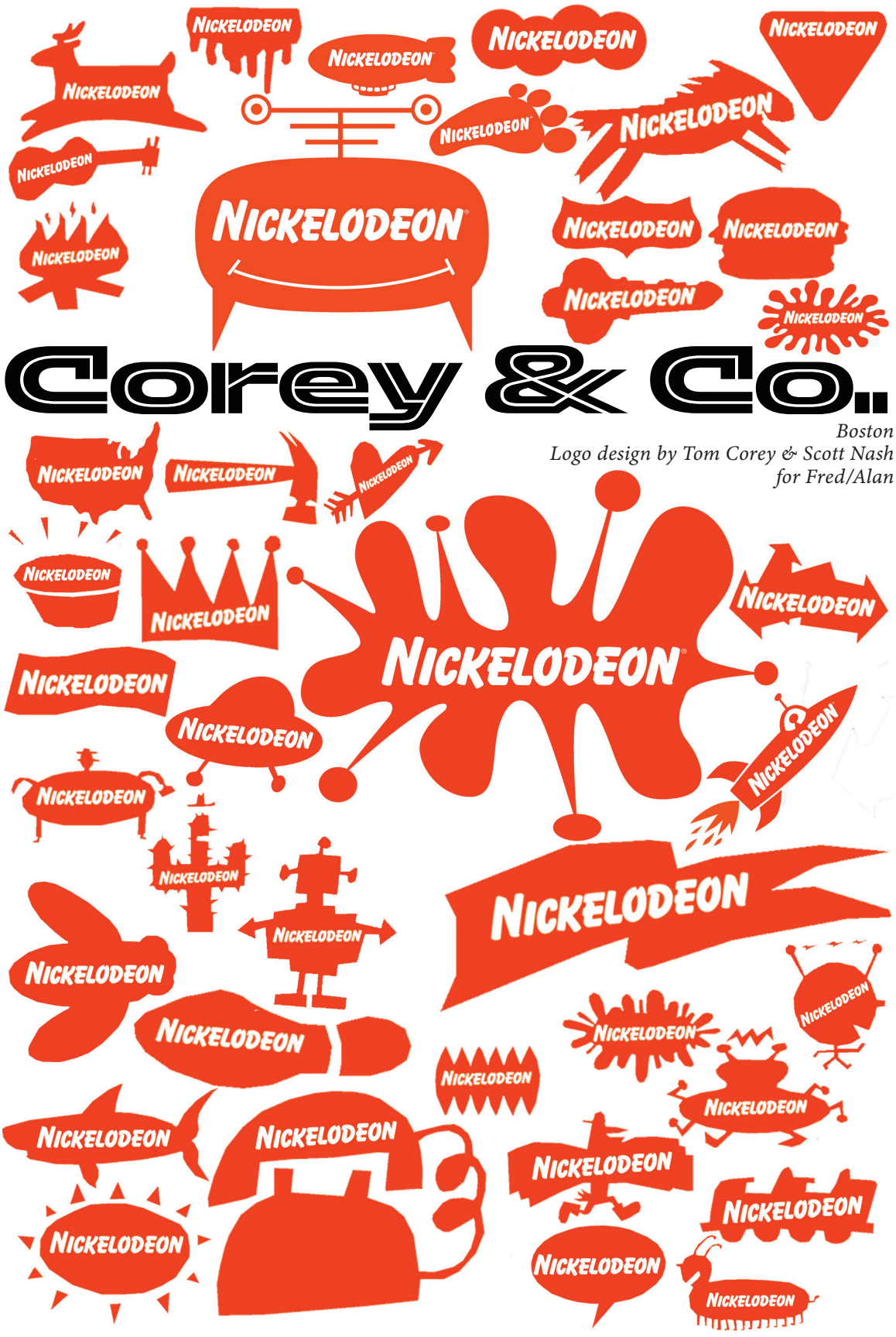
BOOM

Mr. LIZARD'S World

CLOS

The first "new" Nickelodeon promise promo. Written and produced by Scott Webb, 1984.

NICKELODEON



Boston
Logo design by Tom Corey & Scott Nash for Fred/Alan

The origins of the 1984 Nickelodeon logo

Tom Corey and Scott Nash designed a new Nickelodeon logo (its third one) for Fred/Alan in 1984. Here's an excerpt of an interview with Scott from NickAlive.com, published in September 2023.

In the early 1980s, Scott Nash, just out of design school, found himself on a flight to meet with executives from the nascent cable channel for kids, Nickelodeon. He and a former professor, Tom Corey, had been tasked with developing some logos.

"We had these, in retrospect, some really bad ideas," Nash told Yahoo Entertainment. "One of which was...because they were owned by MTV, we would come up with something that was the equivalent of NTV. And instead of having the ever-changing M, we thought we'd turn the N into a door, which would... sort of greet kids and allow us to come into the world of Nickelodeon. But it was a really short-sighted idea, and one that I wasn't comfortable with."

"I don't know!"

Although they had very little time to spare, they decided to toss out what they had and start over.

"So Tom and I, on the flight down to meet with Fred [Seibert] and Alan [Goodman]," who were in charge of rebranding Nickelodeon in 1984, five years after its launch, "sketched on anything we could," Nash says. "We were sketching away. Tom said, 'Well, what do you really want to do on this?' I said, 'I think that a kids' network shouldn't have one particular shape. I think it should constantly change."

One iteration of this evolving logo would be the splat, which was already part of Nickelodeon lore, thanks to one of its earliest programs, *You Can't Do That on Television*, on which the kid stars were regularly slimed with green goo dumped from above anytime they said, "I don't know." So the splat was a no-brainer, and they quickly came up with others.

"And we presented those rough sketches, one of which was on a coffee cup that we were given, because I had run out of paper," Nash says. "And we actually presented the sketches we did on the plane... We basically threw away the proposal that we were going to present to Fred and Alan, and showed them a bunch of sketches done with Sharpies. It was a revelation for me because, again, I was nervous, as a young designer, to show something that unpolished. But [they] absolutely embraced the idea, especially. [They] were very enthusiastic about it."

The so-called 'splat' logo was born.

And though there were eventually hundreds of other Nick logo designs used — the zeppelin, which Nash drew and became the shape of the trophies at the Kids' Choice Awards; a cow; and a dog bone, for example — the paint splatter became a favorite. Nash recalls that the product division particularly loved the splat. For the people responsible for making T-shirts, toys and other brand merch, the logo needed to be consistent;

They were trying to build brand identity.

Nash says his team initially debated whether the color of the splat should be slime green or orange.

"We somehow got some information as to what colors adults least liked at the time. And lime green was one color. The other color was orange, and we went with orange because green is a keyable color," Nash says.

They settled on Pantone 021, the vibrant orange that just screams "FUN!"

Nash notes that everyone involved had a creative energy that comes with working on something fresh and new and vibrant. It was exciting times. He describes some of what they created back then as "groundbreaking," a word that he believes is over-used but appropriate here.

The splat remained part of the network's identity as hits such as "The Ren & Stimpy Show," "Rugrats" and "Hey Dude" cycled through.

"And so, for years," Nash says, "we were very proud of the Nickelodeon logo. We thought it was a new type of graphic identity. We referred to the logo as a flexi-logo. It's not one logo. It's a logo that is imbued with creativity, because it can change and morph. And the various iterations that we saw throughout the years through the creative services department and everyone who worked with it, it was really gratifying to see what people would do with this idea that Tom and I basically hatched on a plane heading down to New York."

In Mathew Klickstein's 2013 book *Slimed! An Oral History of Nickelodeon's Golden Age*, Scott Webb, Nick's first creative director, went as far as citing Nash's late professor-turned-business partner as one of the people most responsible for the network's eventual success. The splat had been everything.

The guys who had made the Nickelodeon logo were suddenly in demand, and they went on to create imagery for Comedy Central, Cartoon Network, FX and more. Nick continued to use the splat until the late aughts, when, according to Variety, its parent company decided to connect all of the Nickelodeon brands — Nick at Nite, Nicktoons, Nick Jr. and TeenNick — by using matching lower-case logos for all of them.

The 'splat' initially might have been the most visible of the logo Corey & Co. designed (though today, it might well be the Kids' Choice blimp) but it was only one out of hundreds that they eventually drew. Tom and Scott became our go-to Fred/Alan designers, the ones who most instinctively understood our approach to designing for the moving pictures of television, and the people we worked with the most often until we built our own in-house graphics department.

...

All Nickelodeon network identifications:
Animation & music producer: Tom Pomposello
Associate producer: Tina Potter
Creative directors: Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert

NOYES & LAYBOURNE

Noyes & Laybourne –independent filmmakers Eli Noyes and Kit Laybourne– became our first creative partners at Nickelodeon.

We'd know Kit quite a while –his "The Animation Book" has always been a must-have– and worked with Eli at MTV, and they jumped in with us right away, eventually making a few dozen shorts network identifications. (and then there were the seemingly hundreds of stop motion, live action variation pieces they did with us for Nick-at-Nite. *(see pages 186 & 187)* Aside from their core creativity –Eli had already been an award winning indie film creator for years– these two were the first of our collaborators to fully embrace the various creative milestones we would institute that could help our viewers fall in love with Nickelodeon.

First up was the infinite changeability of the Nick logo designed by Tom Corey and Scott Nash. And then, there was our sonic identity with the Jive Five. *(Pages 154 & 155)*

Take a look at the claymation on the next page. These images are just the extremes of the designs in only one 10-second spot, and they don't really capture the classic animated transitions that instantly transformed one image into another. Or that there were actually a half dozen of the same visuals with soundtracks that were vocalese from the Five, and also musical scoring and funny sound effect tracks.

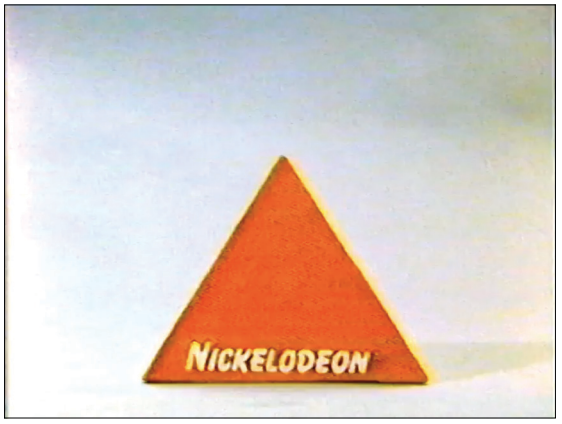
The next three pages are just a few of the other films that this duo graced our audiences. Boy, were we lucky to have such wonderful confederates.

NICKELODEON

NICKELODEON

NICKELODEON

NICKELODEON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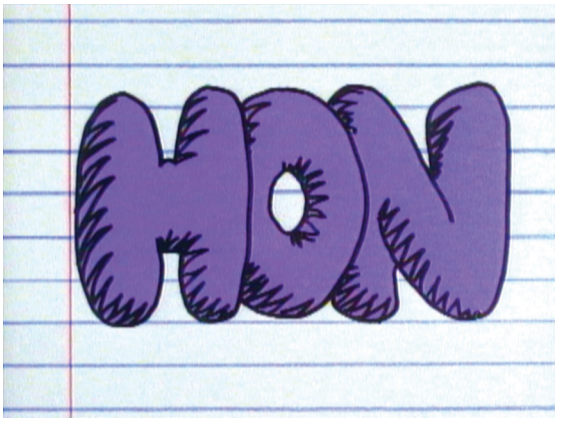
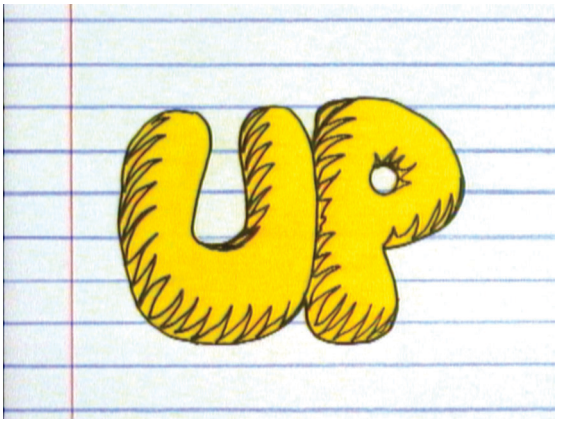
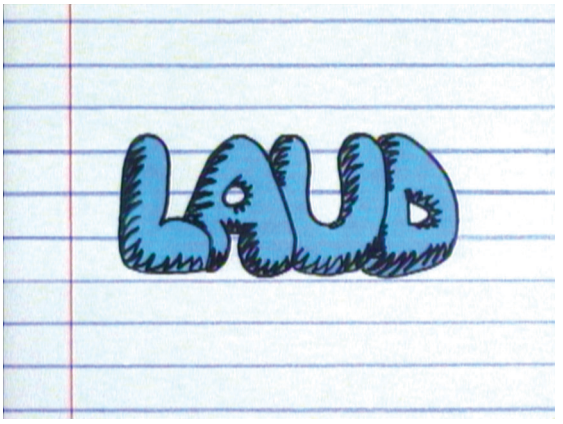
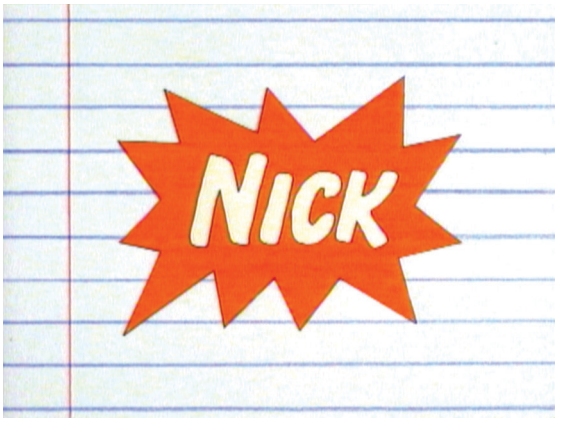
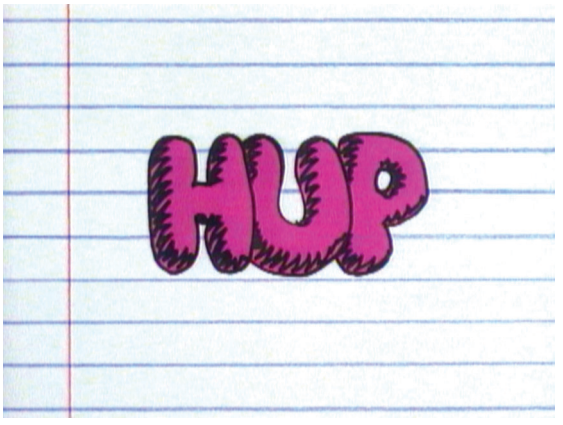
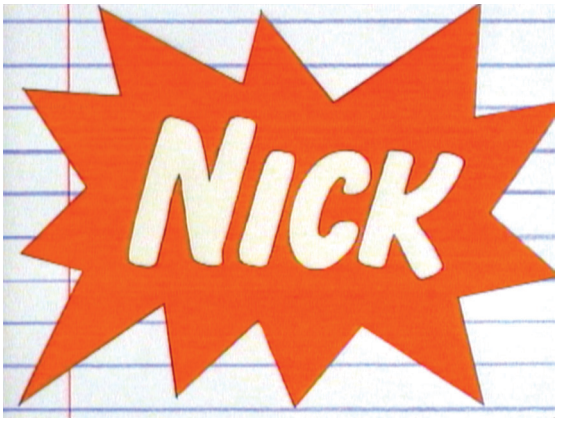




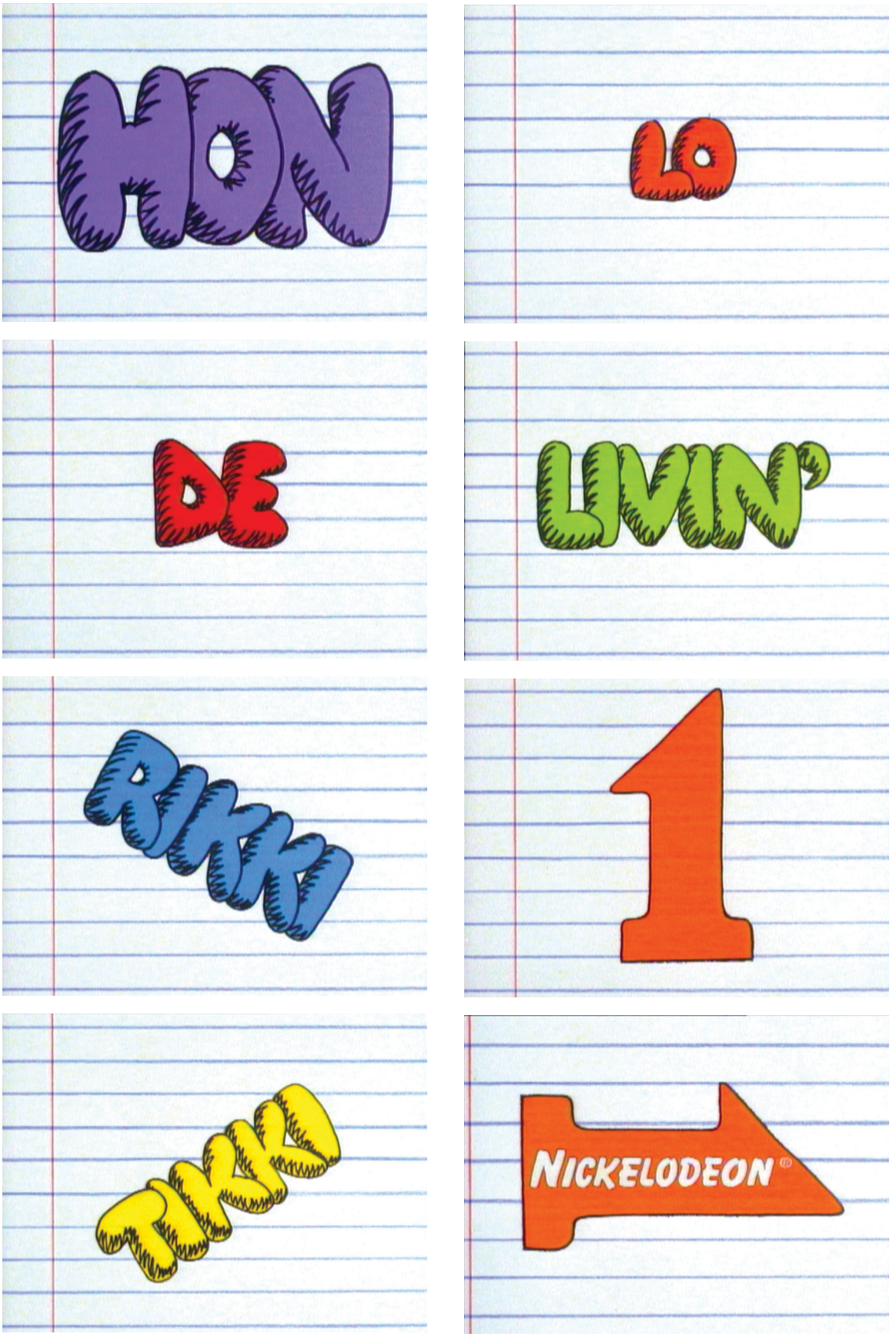




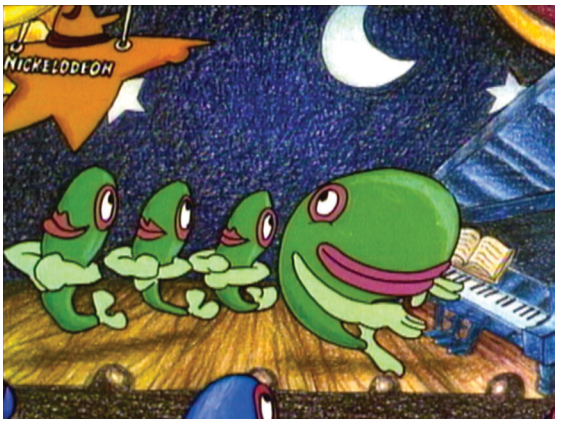


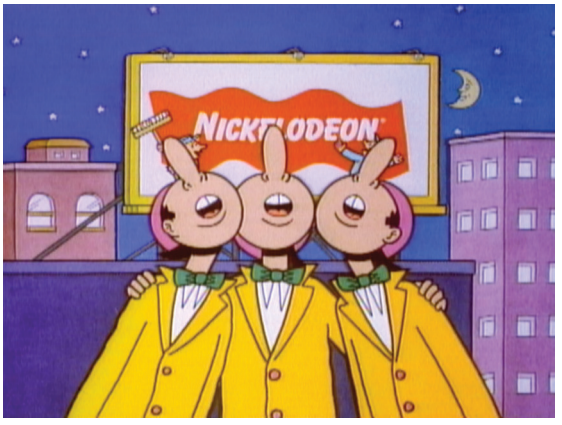


Eugene Pitt & the Jive Five (soundtrack)



Noyes & Laybourne, New York (animation)





Produced by (left) Jerry Lieberman & Kim Deitch; (right) David Lubell;
Soundtracks by Eugene Pitt & the Jive Five

Noyes & Laybourne, New York (animation)

Joey Ahlbum had done the animation for Charlie Ahearn's groundbreaking, 1982 hip-hop documentary "Wild Style." But that's not how we met.

Someone showed us a short film of Joey's, and we were entranced by its illustration style. And when he came by our office, we were completely charmed, so much so that Nickelodeon was the beginning of what's become an almost 50 year creative relationship.

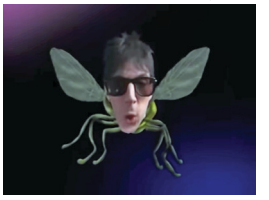
Everyone that's ever worked with Joey was smitten with him and his films, and the folks at our shop were no exception. Every 10-second Nickelodeon ID he presented was so much more than a bunch of drawings moving on a screen. Joey told stories. And when paired up with the infectious words and melodies of the Tom Pomposello produced jingles with The Jive Five, those films and their characters became channel icons. Expecially those dinosaurs!

JOEY AHLBUM

(Check out Joey's animations on the next two pages and then, pages 201, 203, 226-227, for his Fred/Alan commissions for different clients.)

CHAR-LEX

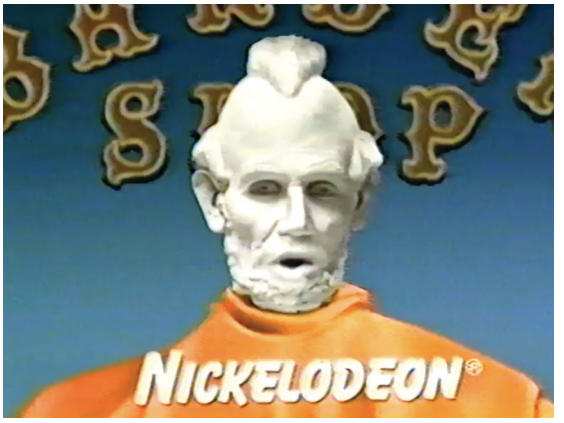
Charlex –the company founded by Charlie Levi and Alex Weil– was completely unknown to us before they won, along with Jeff Stein, the first MTV Video Music Award in 1984 for The Cars' "You Might Think." (The work was supervised by Alan's former co-worker and Fred's future wife, Robin Sloane).



Charlie and Alex began their eye popping video innovations with ad agency animatics (an early look at what a commercial might look like before it was actually produced) and fun commercials for The National Enquirer. But along with The Cars, their explosive main title for Saturday Night Live made them show up on our radar. We just had to work together.

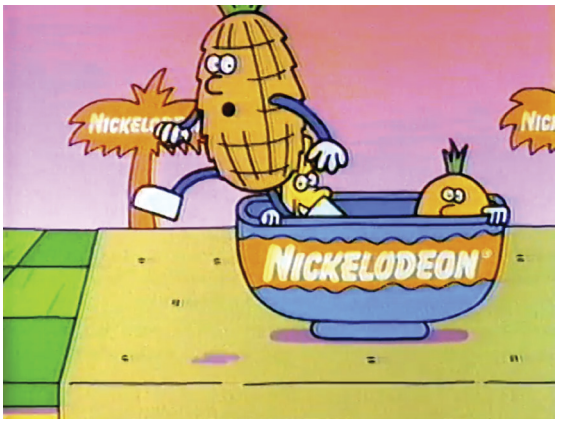
Our first projects together were IDs for Nickelodeon (but, they weren't the last; *see pages 214-15, 252-259, 260-261*). "Singing Presidents" –a pantomime with the a cappella of The Jive Five– on the far right was a perfect amalgamation of their nascent techniques and their creative irreverence.

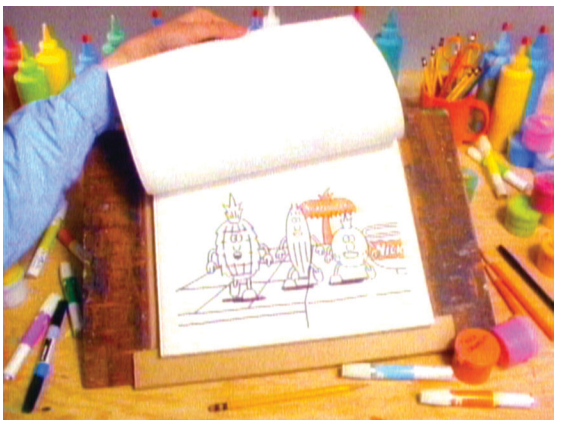
We enjoyed every minute of working with Charlex and we all became great friends. In fact, Charlie and Alex totally honored us when they asked us to create their company's first trade ad campaign. *(Pages 260 & 261)*

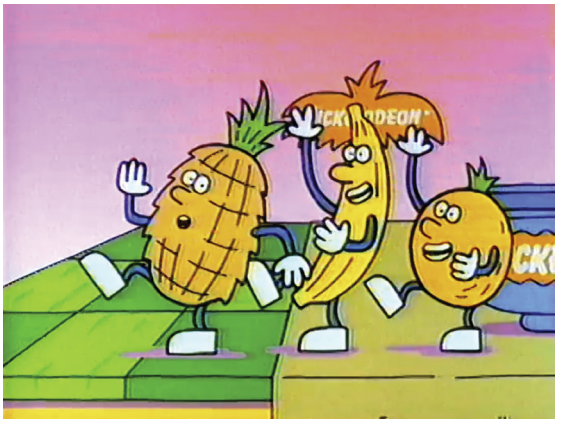


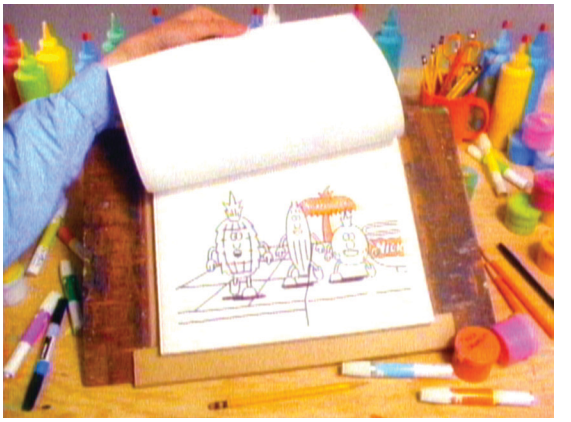
Eugene Pitt & the Jive Five (soundtrack. right)

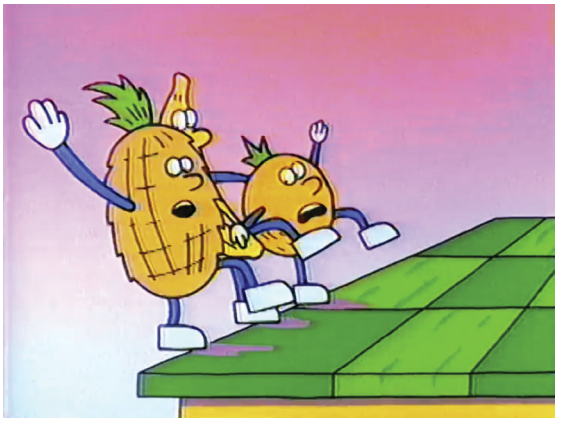
Charlex, New York (animation)

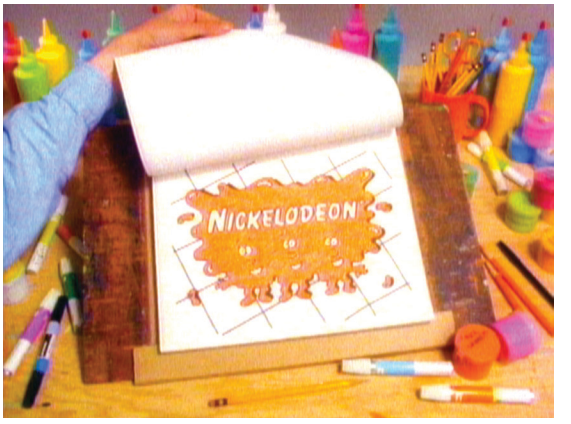




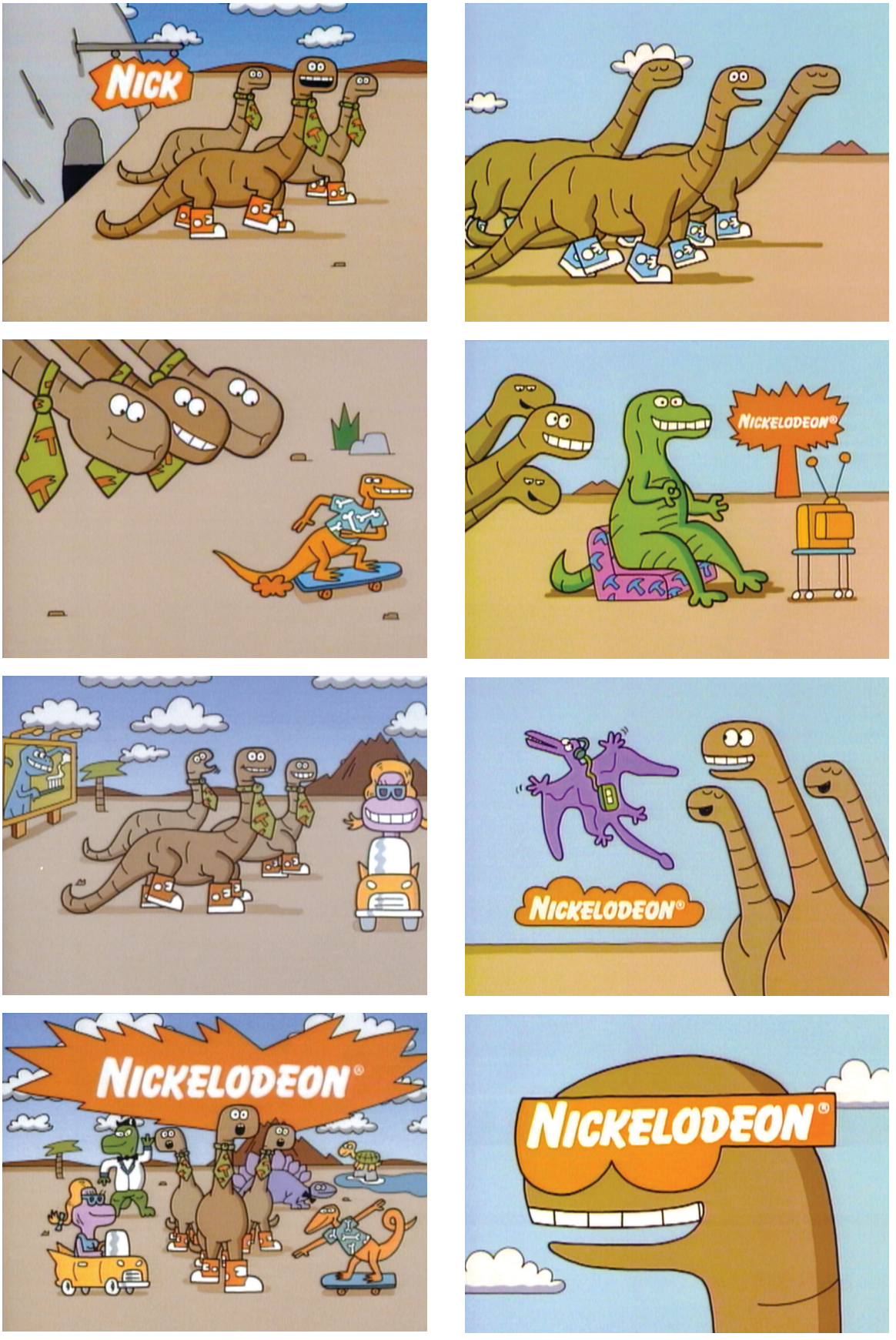








Eugene Pitt & the Jive Five (soundtracks)



Joey Ahlbum, New York (animation)

Eugene Pitt and the Jive Five were as perfect an element of network identity as Fred/Alan ever found. All the filmmakers who worked with us on Nickelodeon lined up to be the first to use their soundtracks on their network IDs.

The Fred/Alan television branding execution often started with defining a network's sound. A background in music and radio made this logical for us, though it was a philosophy grounded in our belief that TV was driven by the sounds first, with the visuals often following the audio lead. In the case of the Nickelodeon rebranding in 1984 the time frame was short, under six months, so the audio and the visual identities were developed simultaneously.

For over a year we'd been thinking about old radio jingles, and thinking of ways to incorporate a human, vocal sound in our identities. (Not for nothing, almost a decade later we actually used those radio style jingles for VH1. (*Pages 214 & 215*). A year before, working on The Playboy Channel's "Hot Rocks," and then at Showtime for "The Honeymooners Lost Episodes," we scouted around for an a cappella group for distinctive soundtracks. Alan's former colleague at CBS Records, writer and producer Marty Pekar, had started the Ambient Sound label to capture contemporary recordings of classic doo-wop groups from the '50s and '60s. He introduced us to the leader of The Jive Five, Eugene Pitt, as "not only a great singer, but a smart man." We found Eugene to be, as former Marvel Comics president and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame CEO Terry Stewart said, "the most underrated soul singer in America," and a wonderful collaborator. When the opportunity to work with Nickelodeon presented itself, we all –including our music and animation producer Tom Pomposello– knew immediately The Jive Five would be the perfect underpinning for defining the sonic vocabulary of the network.

Eugene Pitt, photograph by Sonny Maxon

Working with the group was amazing. Marty was right, Eugene was indeed smart and a fabulous partner. His breadth of composition incorporated gospel, soul, even the close harmony of a barbershop quartet or The Mills Brothers. He and his compatriots were endlessly creative, cheerful, and hard working. A charm.

Convincing Nickelodeon was another story. When we brought up the notion of a sound identity, Nickelodeon executives, still not fully understanding of where we intended to steer the channel, suggested a consideration of Raffi, then a recent phenomenon as a singer for young children. "He's very popular; our research confirms it." A complete non-starter for us.

Fred/Alan tried to bring them around to a doo-wop sound, but at first they fell on deaf ears. "Doo-wop's 30 years old, no

kid has ever heard of it." We won the day on two grounds. Typically, Fred was a bit academic, playing on the executives' inclinations. "Alan and I love all forms of Black American music, and using doo-wop will be a great way to educate American kids without anyone being the wiser."

Alan went right for it. He opened his mouth and, quoting The Marcels' arrangement of chestnut "Blue Moon," sang:

"Bom-ma-bom, a-bom-bom-a-bom, ba-ba-bom-bom-a-bomp, b-dang-a-dang-dang, b-ding-a-dong-ding."

"What kid isn't going to love that right away?" Alan asked.

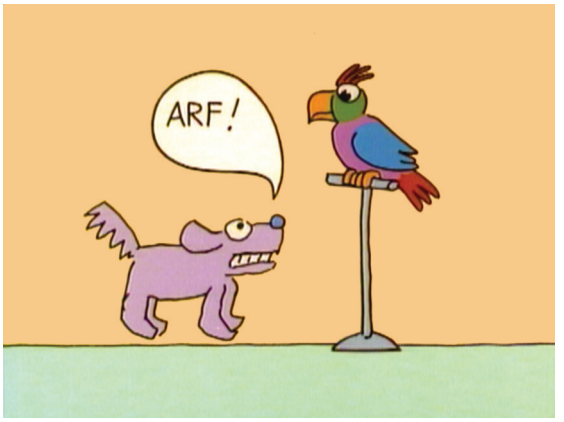
Case closed. The first audio sting that Eugene, Tom and Alan composed –and the Jive Five sang– was…

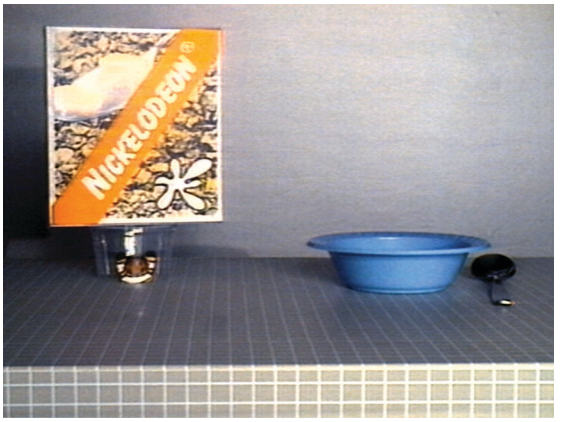
Nick-Nick-Nick-Nick-Nick-Nick-Nick-Nick-Nick-el-o-de-on.

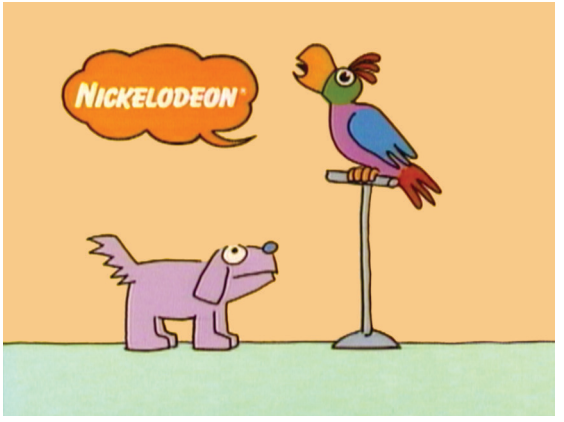
Nickelodeon is still using that song today, 40 years later.

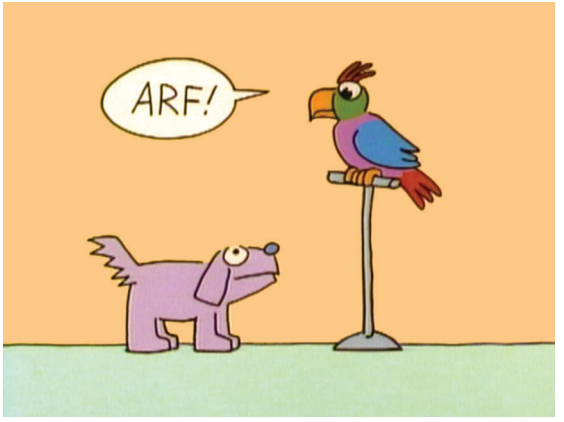
The Jive Five was always a perennial favorite on the oldies and doo-wop circuit until Eugene passed away in 2018. But the group's popularity grew exponentially with the Nickelodeon engagement. So much so that their stage uniforms quickly matched Nickelodeon orange (*Pantone Orange #021*).

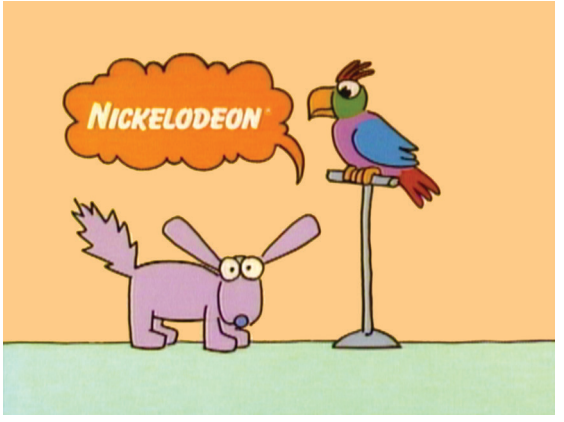
Frame grab from "The Jive Five for Nickelodeon" by Jon Kane/Optic Nerve, New York





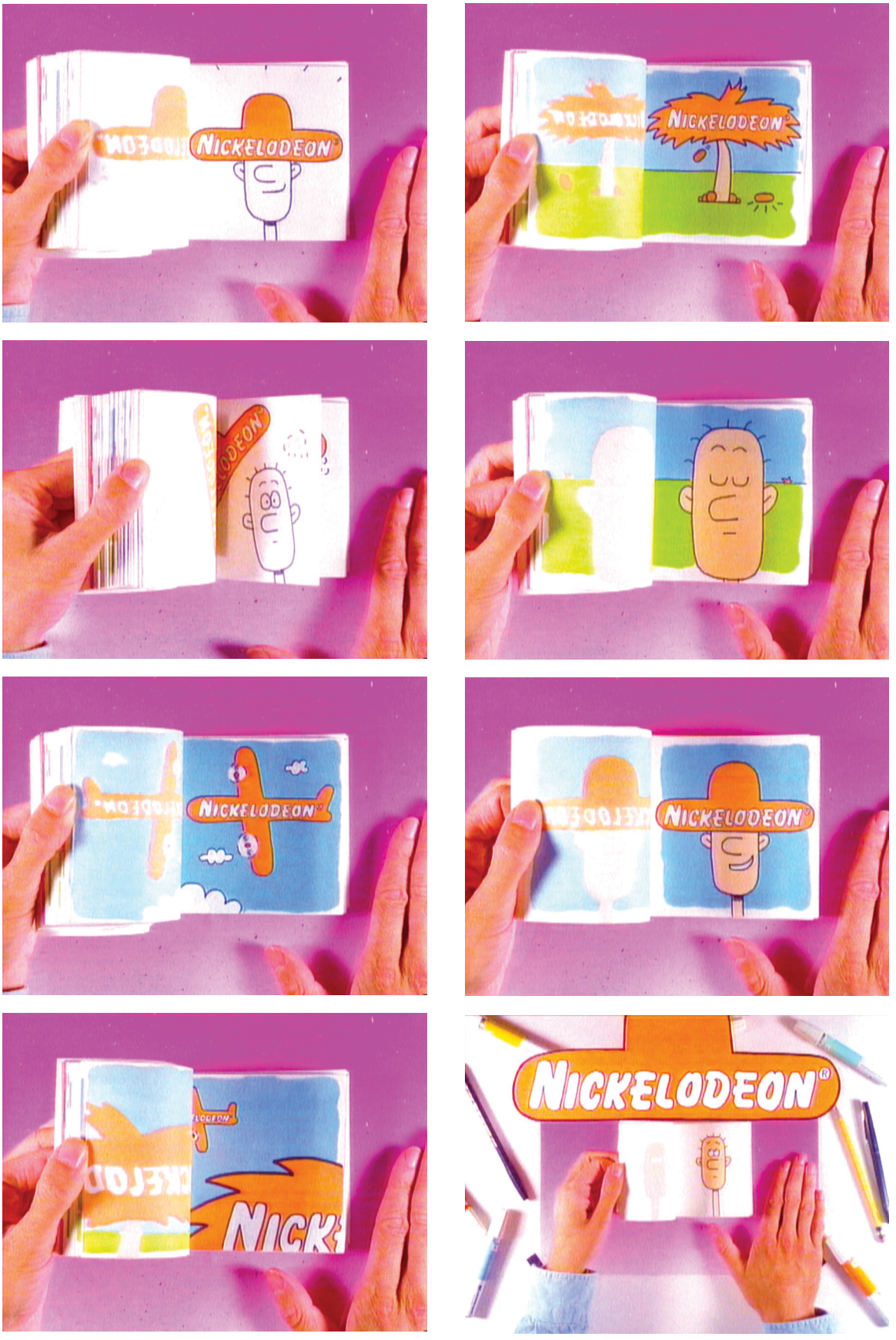






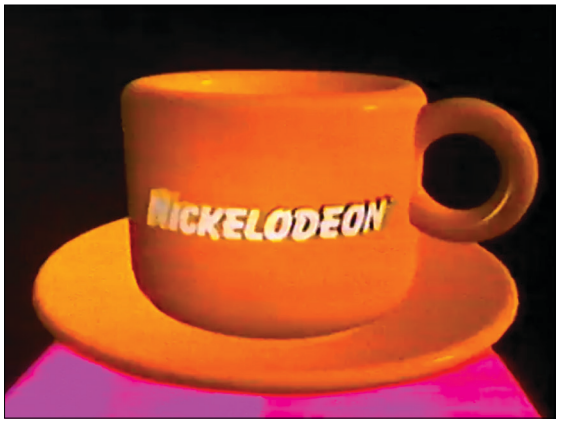
Marv Newland, International Rocketship, Vancouver

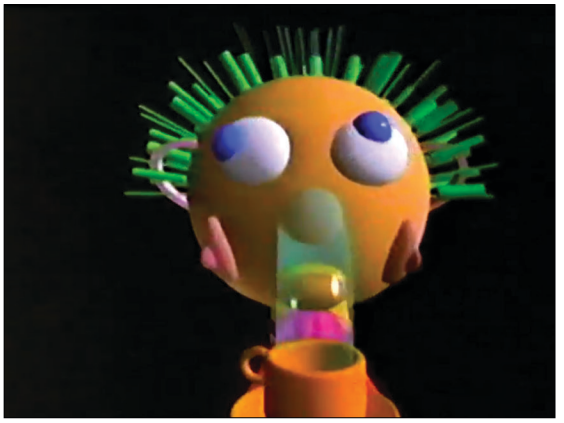
Paul Fierlinger Animation, PA

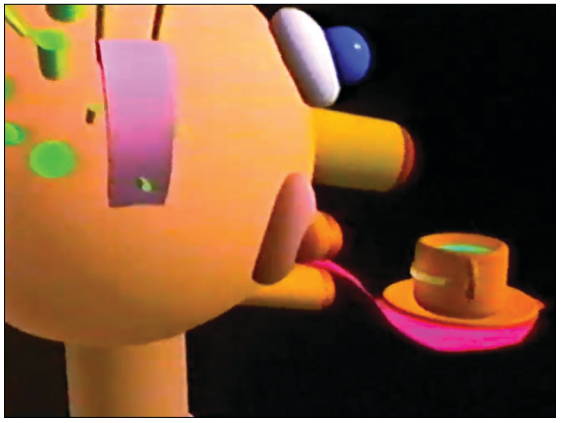


Joey Ahlbum, New York

Howard Hoffman & campers, Camp Androscoggin, Maine



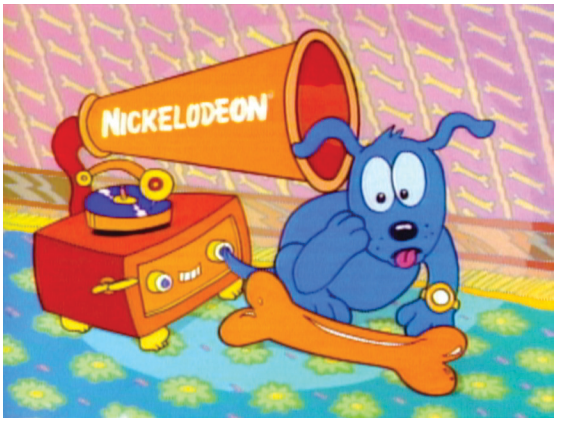


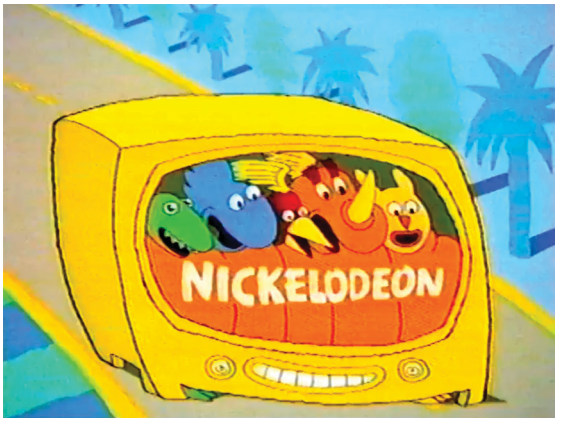


Computer animation by Edward Bakst

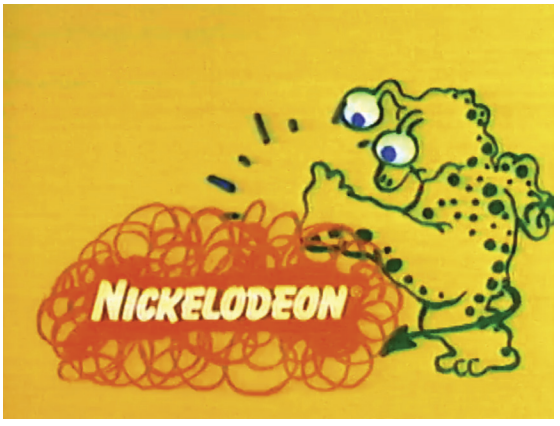
(Previous page) Artist/director Howard Hoffman spent each summer running an animation program at his childhood summer camp in Maine. He was convinced –and he was right!– that his school age campers would be creatively stoked to be working on projects that would show up on their favorite television network. The first year results were so inpiring, we continued the program for several years.

(This page) Pixar's first short was still a couple of years away when Alan's film school classmate pitched to use this new fangled tech to use computers to generated film images for a 10-second Nickelodeon network identification. Since creative experimentation was at the heart of all of our work, it was a no brainer.





Colossal Pictures, San Francisco



Candy Kugel, Buzzco, New York

"Mom... the jeans come ripped."

Maybe there's no sense in kids wearing clothes that look like hand-me-downs. But however outrageous the styles get, it's rags-to-riches when it comes to kids and fashion.

76% of kids choose their own clothes. 83% frequent department stores at least once a month. And 62% say they must own and wear the latest fashion.

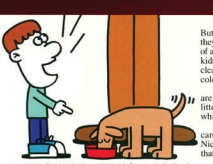
Nickelodeon® is the perfect fit for your advertising. Because even while your trends are changing, kids won't–they'll keep watching the channel they think is coolest. And you can bet they'll notice who's dressed the coolest, too.

Fashion advertisers buy NICKELODEON

Nickelodeon: Where every impression counts.

Source: Nickelodeon® Yankelovich Youth Monitor, 1988. Nickelodeon® is a registered trademark owned by MTV Networks, a division of Viacom International Inc. © 1989 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.

"I wish I could eat dog biscuits to clean *my* teeth!"



Kids don't always act sensibly. But when it comes to their pets, they're like a bunch of parents. 73% of all pet-owning families put the kids in charge of pouring the food, cleaning the messes, braving the cold walks . . . all that pet stuff.

Which means those same kids are telling mom and dad which kitty litter to buy, which shampoo, and which dog food cleans teeth, too.

You can reach these little caretakers by advertising on Nickelodeon® We're the channel that makes kids go animal.

Pet supply advertisers buy NICKELODEON

Nickelodeon: Where every impression counts.

Source: Nickelodeon® Yankelovich Youth Monitor, 1988. Nickelodeon® is a registered trademark owned by MTV Networks, a division of Viacom International Inc. © 1989 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.

"Mom, how come Grandpa eats his fast food so slow?"

Kids have always loved fast food. Today, that love affair is still speeding along.

97% of kids like french fries. 95% are head-over-heels with hamburgers. They also have strong feelings for pizza, pasta, chicken, soda and ice cream–to go. At lunchtime you'll find 84% of kids going jaw-to-jaw with one or more of the above at least once a month. Dinner's a close second at 77%.

The fastest way to reach the little eaters is to advertise on Nickelodeon® They'll love you because they love us–we're the ones who feed their imaginations.

Fast food advertisers buy NICKELODEON

Nickelodeon: Where every impression counts.

Source: Nickelodeon® Yankelovich Youth Monitor, 1988. Nickelodeon® is a registered trademark owned by MTV Networks, a division of Viacom International Inc. © 1989 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.

"Dad, can we take our vacation in a time zone where I can stay up later?"

Not every kid is cut out to be a geographer. However, many are already leading experts in the field of travel.

42% of all kids helped their parents decide where the family should go on vacation. They like going to Florida, Hawaii, California . . . all the same places over-worked parents like going.

When they're not building sand castles or sunning, you can find these young beachcombers watching Nickelodeon® So place your commercials with us. Business may pick up so much you'll be hard pressed to find vacation time for yourself.

Travel advertisers buy NICKELODEON

Nickelodeon: Where every impression counts.

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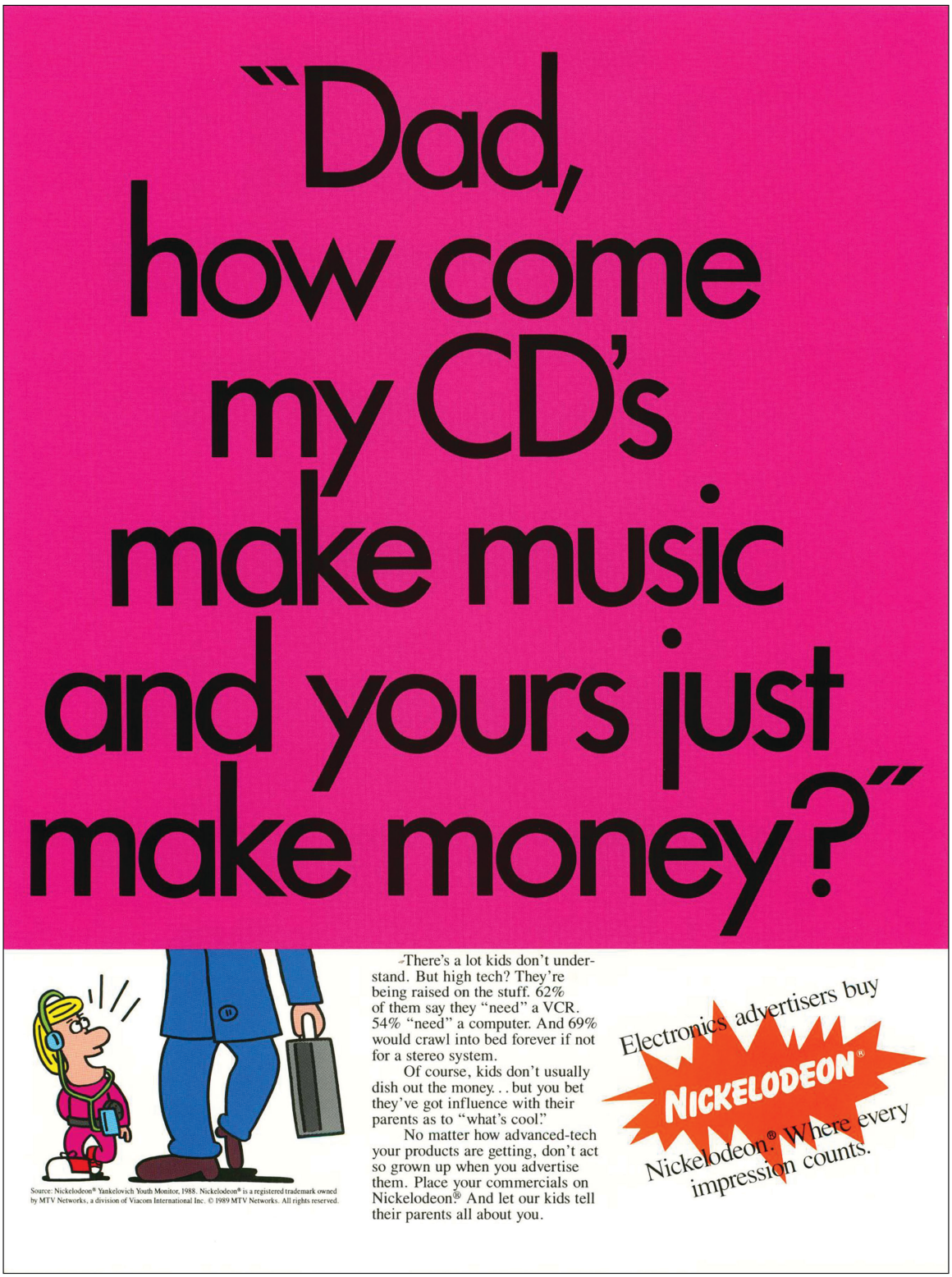
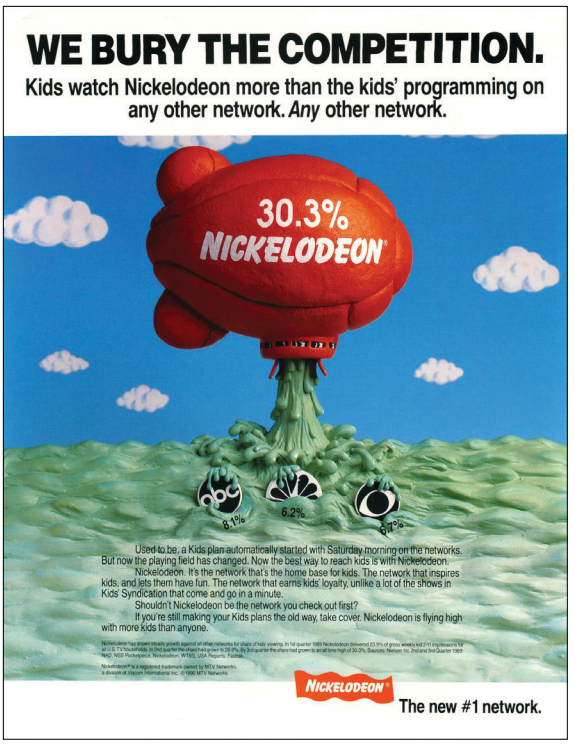
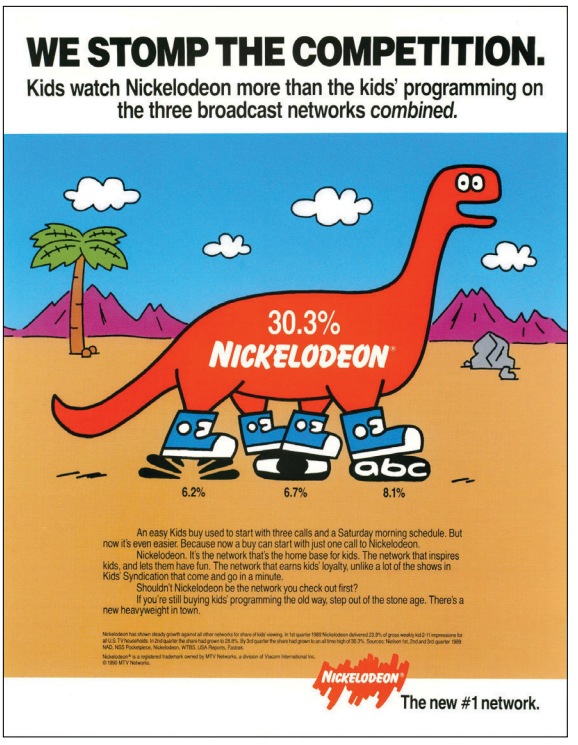
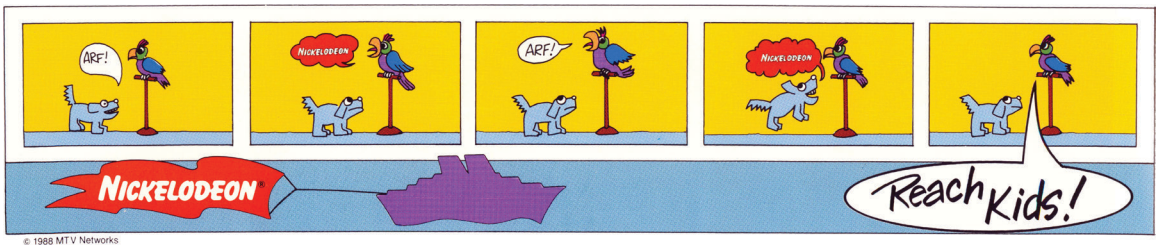

"Dad, how come my CD's make music and yours just make money?"
Source: Nickelodeon® Yankelovich Youth Monitor, 1988. Nickelodeon® is a registered trademark owned by MTV Networks, a division of Viacom International Inc. © 1989 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.
There's a lot kids don't understand. But high tech? They're being raised on the stuff. 62% of them say they "need" a VCR. 54% "need" a computer. And 69% would crawl into bed forever if not for a stereo system.
Of course, kids don't usually dish out the money. . . but you bet they've got influence with their parents as to "what's cool."
No matter how advanced-tech your products are getting, don't act so grown up when you advertise them. Place your commercials on Nickelodeon.® And let our kids tell their parents all about you.
Electronics advertisers buy
NICKELODEON®
Nickelodeon.® Where every impression counts.

Advertising magazine trade ads 1988-1992


WE BURY THE COMPETITION.
Kids watch Nickelodeon more than the kids' programming on any other network. Any other network.
30.3%
NICKELODEON
8.1%
6.2%
6.7%
Used to be, a Kids plan automatically started with Saturday morning on the networks. But now the playing field has changed. Now the best way to reach kids is with Nickelodeon.
Nickelodeon. It's the network that's the home base for kids. The network that inspires kids, and lets them have fun. The network that earns kids' loyalty, unlike a lot of the shows in Kids' Syndication that come and go in a minute.
Shouldn't Nickelodeon be the network you check out first?
If you're still making your Kids plans the old way, take cover. Nickelodeon is flying high with more kids than anyone.
NICKELODEON
The new #1 network.


WE STOMP THE COMPETITION.
Kids watch Nickelodeon more than the kids' programming on the three broadcast networks combined.
30.3%
NICKELODEON
abc
6.2%
6.7%
8.1%
An easy Kids buy used to start with three calls and a Saturday morning schedule. But now it's even easier. Because now a buy can start with just one call to Nickelodeon.
Nickelodeon. It's the network that's the home base for kids. The network that inspires kids, and lets them have fun. The network that earns kids' loyalty, unlike a lot of the shows in Kids' Syndication that come and go in a minute.
Shouldn't Nickelodeon be the network you check out first?
If you're still buying kids' programming the old way, step out of the stone age. There's a new heavyweight in town.
NICKELODEON
The new #1 network.



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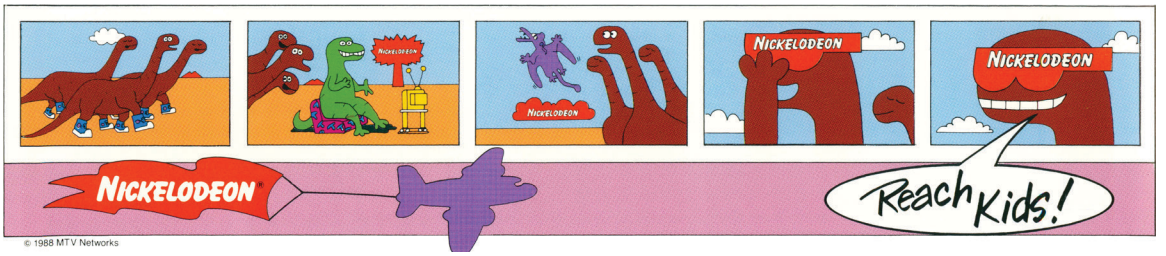
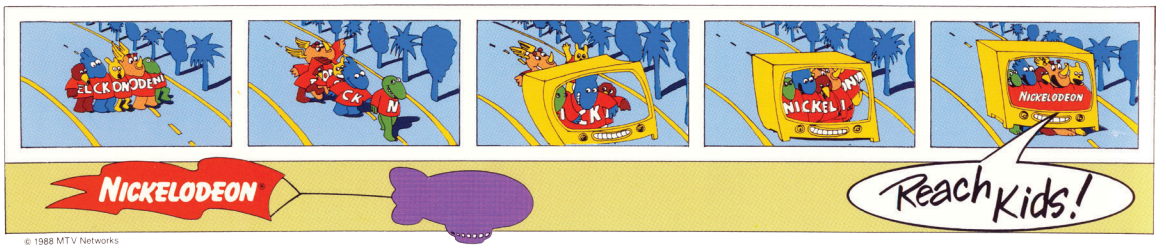


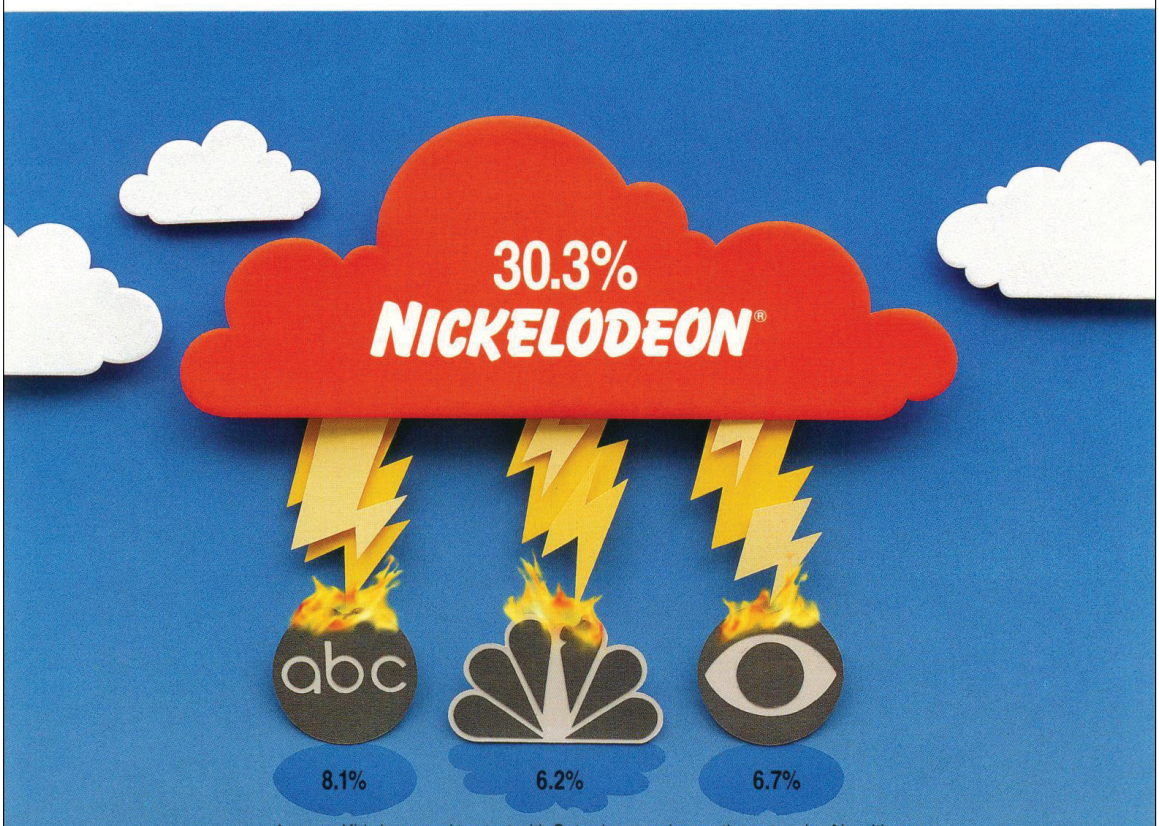
© 1988 MTV Networks



© 1988 MTV Networks

WE ZAP THE COMPETITION.

Kids watch Nickelodeon more than the kids' programming on any other network. *Any* other network.



An easy Kids buy used to start with Saturday morning on the networks. Now it's even easier. Because now a buy can start with just one call—to Nickelodeon.

Nickelodeon. It's the network that's the home base for kids. The network that inspires kids, and lets them have fun. The network that earns kids' loyalty, unlike a lot of the shows in Kids' Syndication that come and go in a minute.

Shouldn't Nickelodeon be the network you check out first?

If you're still buying TV the old way, recharge your battery. There's a new way to put a jolt in your schedule.

Nickelodeon has shown steady growth against all other networks for share of kids' viewing. In 1st quarter 1989 Nickelodeon delivered 23.9% of gross weekly kid 2-11 impressions for all U.S. TV households. In 2nd quarter the share had grown to 28.8%. By 3rd quarter the share had grown to an all time high of 30.3%. Sources: Nielsen 1st, 2nd and 3rd Quarter 1989; NAD, NSS Pocketpiece, Nickelodeon, WTBS, USA Reports, Fastrak.

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NICKELODEON®

The new #1 network.

EUREEKA!

Now we have an ACE up our sleeve.

On January 14th, 1990 Nickelodeon's own "Eureeka's Castle" won an Award for Cable Excellence ...WOW!

It was for Children's Programming, 6 and under, and the beautiful Cheryl Tiegs handed it to us, and we were so excited and proud! We made a speech at the ceremony, but we'd like to make another one here...

Ahem... We want to thank all the dragons, bats, wizards (and people) who made this award possible.

NICKELODEON

Thanks gang!

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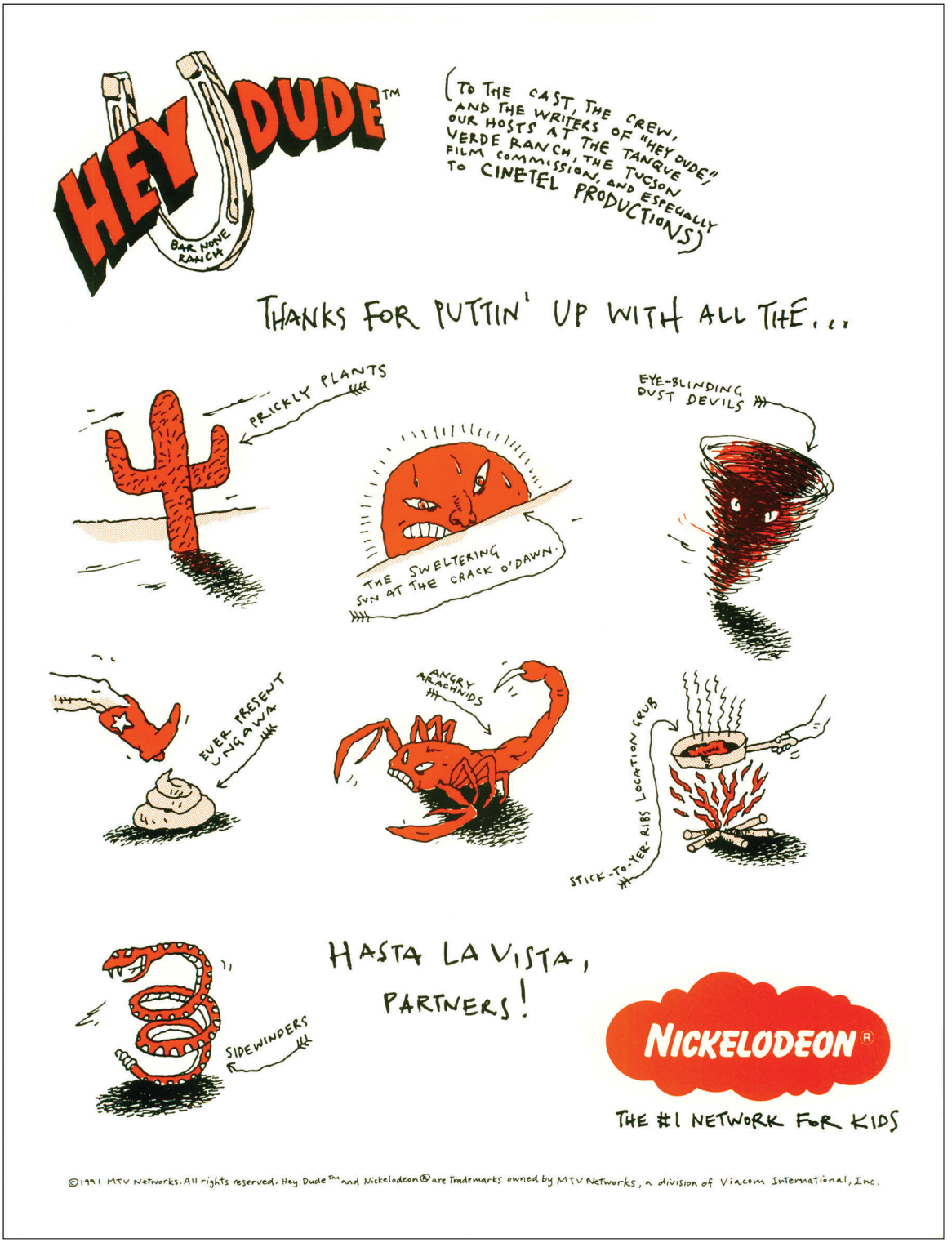
HEY DUDE™
BAR NONE RANCH
(TO THE CAST, THE CREW, AND THE WRITERS OF "HEY DUDE", OUR HOSTS AT THE TANQUE VERDE RANCH, THE TUCSON FILM COMMISSION, AND ESPECIALLY TO CINETEL PRODUCTIONS)
THANKS FOR PUTTIN' UP WITH ALL THE...
PRICKLY PLANTS
THE SWELTERING SUN AT THE CRACK O'DAWN.
EYE-BLINDING DUST DEVILS
EVER PRESENT LIZARDS
ANGRY ARACHNIDS
STICK-TO-YER-RIBS LOCATION GRUB
SIDEWINDERS
HASTA LA VISTA, PARTNERS!
NICKELODEON®
THE #1 NETWORK FOR KIDS
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Alan Goodman
"Hey Dude" story editor

Sometime in early 1988, Nickelodeon was on the hunt for a new advertising agency.

For four years, Gerry Laybourne had relied on us for programming and promotional advice, which had extended into all areas of how Nickelodeon presented itself to the world off of the television screen.

We'd help them reinvent the world of the advertising "upfront" presentations, where broadcasting and cable networks put agency media buyers in an auditorium and showed slides of their audience performance and maybe a bit of video of upcoming shows, hoping to persuade them to buy next year's ad inventory. Fred/Alan made the argument that kids advertising was ho-hum for most of the buyers and Nickelodeon showing slides was more ho-hum. Shouldn't the network that had exploded modern programming with the runaway success of *Double Dare's* "physical challenges" –putting contestants in vats of melted chocolate or smashing eggs on their heads– show up with a new method of presentation?

Nickelodeon's first upfront required the media buyers to run a *Double Dare* gauntlet *before* they got hit with the facts. Their upfront was such a success that all the networks upped their game for the next 30+ years.

In our role as advisers and consultants, we found ourselves talking about advertising agencies. Typically, advertising agencies go through a multi-step process in snagging a new client. Nick's recent success –becoming the top rated cable network, and staying that way, thanks to our brand and promotion repositioning in 1984, and the launch of our creation of Nick-at Nite *(pages 180-199)*– had put them at top of the most desired accounts. After all, cable was the hottest new media thing in the '80s, and Nick's worst-to-first performance had become the hottest thing in cable.

The problem with all the agencies? They had mostly made their bones in non-media –laundry detergent, automobiles, beauty products and the like– so their strategic and tactical knowledge didn't endear themselves to Nick's management.

As we discussed the pros and mostly cons of the agency pitches, one day Gerry burst out, "Why don't you guys do it?!"

We explained that we weren't structured properly –no media buying, no account executive structure, no in-house art direction, et cetera, et cetera– but she wasn't buying it. A bit of to and fro, and Fred/Alan added advertising to our branding and programming practice.

As we geared up our infrastructure, Nick had a new problem. No matter how strong the channel's ratings performance, media buying was a pretty conservative profession. And, no matter our success, buyers and their clients liked it the old way. For decades, kids' television had been defined by Saturday mornings on US broadcast networks, CBS, NBC and ABC. That's the way it was, and that's what the clients wanted. None of this cable crap. On the surface,

they had an argument, because while Nick was on seven days a week and #1 in cable, the average rating delivered a fraction of the kids on Saturday mornings. The result? Not too many clients and agencies would buy Nick ads.

Alan: DickGershon –a consultant after he left LPG/Pon– had a revelation that Nick was winning in monthly cume – most viewers in a month. It's a worthless number since being spread across a month there was no weight to any of it against any one show or series. When he told me that, I said "It sounds to me like we're the number one network for kids."

Nickelodeon was beating the networks in kids!

Fred/Alan's most effective trade campaign *(pages 164 & 165)* put the case front and center in every trade publication available. The argument was so effective, that even under the threat of lawsuits from the networks, the floodgates on incoming ad sales for Nickelodeon were opened.

Who would've thought?
Fred/Alan never expected to become an actual advertisting agency, but eventually we became the agency of record for all of Nick's sister channels, including MTV, VH1 and Comedy Central.

Thanks Gerry!

Fred/Alan's successes in cable network branding with MTV, Nickelodeon, Nick-at-Nite and VH1 had captured the attention of MTV Networks' competitors, and soon enough we were visiting most of them.

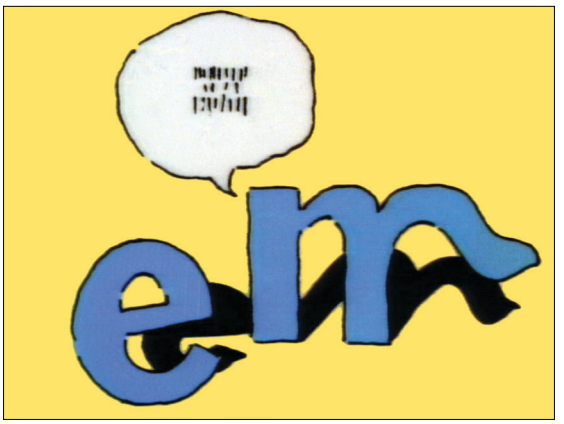
Lifetime was our first new network branding client *(the next two pages).* A rebranding of the unsuccessful Cable Health Network, the new management had decided on a strategy of "Talk Television," the TV equivalent of the soon-to-be combustion of "Talk Radio." It was a great idea, poorly executed –eventually, Fox News and MSNBC fine tuned the format successfully– and within a few years the programming morphed and by the early '90s became "Television for Women." Fred/Alan tenure was long gone.

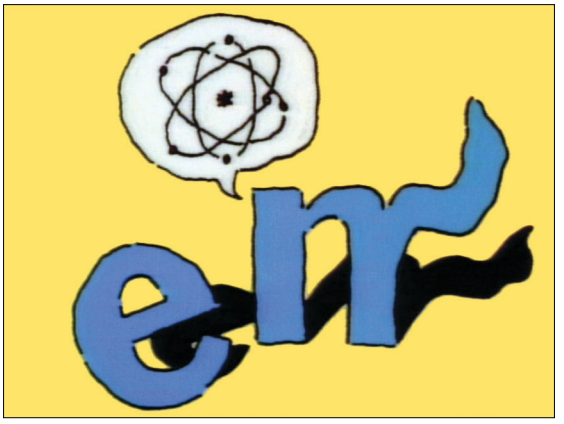
We brought in our Nickelodeon logo friends, Tom Corey and Scott Nash, to redesign their logo. We enlisted, among others, Buzzco, Charlex, Olive Jar Productions, and Colossal Pictures to help us develop some fantastic animated "video logos" to distinguish the channel. Fred spent countless hours with the on-air promotion team trying to get them to unlearn the traditional promo rules that seemed to seep from their pores.

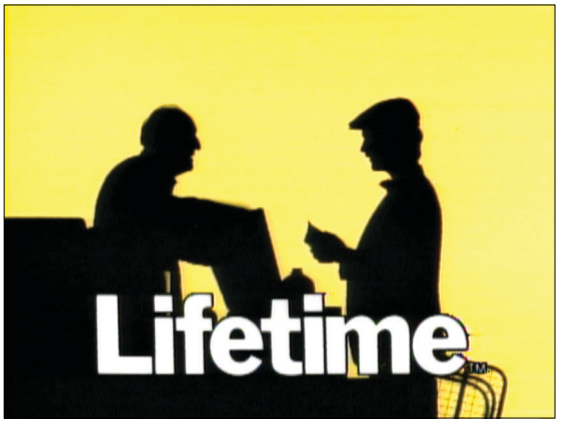
We were proud of our work, but nothing we did could make any difference. A not-too-bad programming strategy, very poorly executed, rarely works.

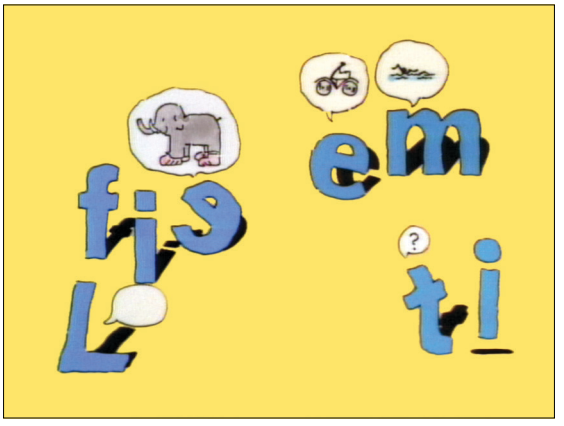
Ah well.

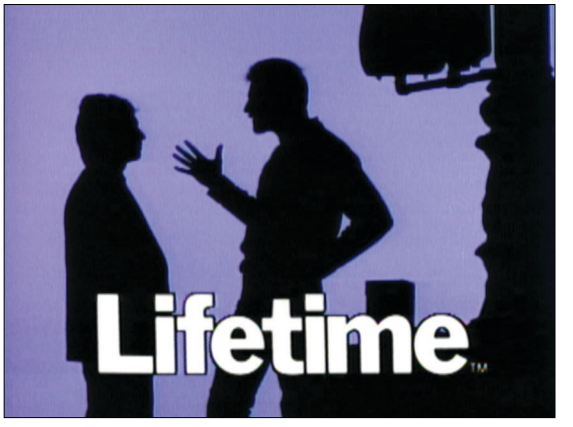
Producer: Tom Pomposello
Associate producer & voice over: Tina Potter











Buzzco, New York

Colossal Pictures, San Francisco

LIFETIME
1984 -1985

Logo by Corey & Co., Boston

Olive Jar Productions, Boston

Buzzco, New York

"For me, when I was a kid, happiness was a Blue Note record on the turntable."
by Charlie Lourie
I first met Michael Cuscuna when I was director of marketing for Blue Note records in the seventies. Michael and I had the same tastes in jazz and we became friends.
The specific idea for Mosaic came slowly, and it isn't easy to describe.
We are the only label reissuing jazz that doesn't put out what are essentially "samplers". Mosaic's concept is NOT to do an overview that's a smattering of this and a smattering of that. Instead we prefer to shine the light on the most important period in an important artist's career, and present that definitively. In other words, when I say complete and definitive, I'm talking about going into the vaults and going through every session tape, picking out all the worthy alternate takes, all the unissued tunes from those sessions, and doing a complete presentation of those sessions. So now is going to go into the studio five times instead of three times, and that's going to become three just isn't accurate of what we put out.
There are scholarly works in addition to being complete entertainments. That's why libraries all over the world are buying them. You can go into the N.Y. Public Library, or the Rodgers and Hammerstein Collection of Recorded Sound, or you can go into any number of libraries in this country and find the Mosaic sets because they're in those section and I just stare at them! I mean 42 different countries... I get letters from Russia, people pleading... it's really very humbling and very exciting.
But basically, completeness is only part of what makes us unique. The way we present our recordings is also very important. Mosaic sets are 3 to 20 page books, in-depth essays, discographies, high-quality vinyl and a quality pressing plant that took us a year to find... and getting our records reasonably...that's part of the Mosaic concept. So is the way we choose the artists we release.
We like to concentrate on very important jazz artists, whether they've been acknowledged or not. Take Lee Konitz, for instance. He's one of the most original and consistently creative musicians in the history of jazz, but he's still relatively obscure and unrecognized ...until not just a cult and people get to hear it and judge for themselves. For example, Tina Brooks is just a monumental artist who got passed over during his lifetime because he was a victim of racial society and drugs and all the clichés of the jazz life. He was a tremendous tenor player and composer and a privileged people ever heard of. And we're planning our his records now and Tina Brooks is being written about in Newsweek magazine, and his picture is in the London Times, and people all over the world are listening to his music and writing about him in glowing, wonderful, loving terms. That gives me the kind of gratification that you can't get doing much else. That's Mosaic to me.
Tina Brooks at Blue Note session.
James P. Johnson
"The germ of Mosaic -- A record label for people who want it all."
by Michael Cuscuna
Charlie Lourie and I wanted to do what we used to do when we were people should do.
As a lifelong collector and jazz fan I know the kind of label I'd like to see. I want to be able to get rid of all those jumbled up albums with a few cuts from here and a few cuts from there. I just want to have, in coherent, chronological order, every thing that a particular artist did. That's what we really the great of Mosaic. We're a record label for people who want it all. We're really doing packages for ourselves that seem to be for a lot of other people too.
"The Mosaic catalog is small, but every item is a gem. Handsome debut booklets come with every set and, most important, the records are pressed on pure vinyl and transferred from the original or best available source recordings. The sound quality is even better than the old Blue Note releases."
Patrick Ecclesine, Baltimore Evening Sun.

Questions and Answers
In the years Mosaic's been around, a number of questions have been asked repeatedly about the company and the music we release. Here are the first of many we'll be trying to answer in each of the future catalogs:
Question: I love your Blue Note reissues. Keep 'em coming! But how about other worthy jazz? Not everything great was on Blue Note.... your records just make it seem that way!
Answer: Our first seven sets were all Blue Note or Pacific Jazz, all issued by Capitol/EMI. But now, we've got the Gould recordings of Charles Mingus, and the Black Lion recordings of Thelonious Monk. Check out our newly released Verve recordings of Roddy McDowall and Sonny Clark. And we just completed deals with CBS and RCA. We're growing. And we intend to grow slowly, and maintain our standards.
Question: I read somewhere that you guys are "smuggling." All I can see is, either you're charging too little or everyone else is charging too much. How can you afford the box set? The booklet and the super pressings for your #9 a few prices?
Answer: There are a lot of people, like you, who say "no matter what this stuff costs, count me in." But there are also a lot of people out there, a lot of young kids and a lot of school, who can't afford to buy records, and they see our records recommended in Musician, or the Rolling Stone Jazz Record Guide... people who write us who have just discovered jazz, and who are so excited that they finally get the money together, and we don't want to lose those people. They're too important to us and to the future of jazz. We could get more, but we just think that what we charge is fair. And we're doing well enough.
Question: Why do the early Monk recordings, with their earlier staff, sound so much better on Mosaic than on any of the other reissues through the years?
Answer: They are direct-to-disc recordings. Direct-to-disc recording was a process that went in fits-and-starts in many of today's "state-of-the-art" audiophile recordings. But their crisp, original sound was mangled in the transfer to magnetic tape in the early fifties. Also, those primitive tunefiles were what have always been used for reissues. We tracked down the original discs, had them properly washed, and we retransferred them to modern recording tape (which is another complicated process). And, if we're right, the difference is amazing. The book, had sound you hear is not artificially equalized in... it's naturally there on the discs, but most producers never bothered to discover this!
Mosaic Records Limited Editions.
For people who want it all.
Duke Ellington, Carmen Novik, Chico Hamilton at the Black Los Angeles, 1955.
What's important to you is what's important to Mosaic.
Important Artists
Releasing records by Monk, Mulligan or Mingus is easy. We like to try and go further, releasing some artists with less visibility. This way, we know Mosaic isn't recycling artists, we're recognizing them.
Complete Definitive Collections
Every Mosaic set is complete within its scope and, in almost every case, organized chronologically. All issued material, all unissued takes and all valid alternate takes are included, with Gene Norman's Just Jazz concerts as the lone exception.
These collections finally eliminate the need to accumulate various haphazard reissue compilations with overlapping material.
And, they eliminate the need to wait and see if some new side or two will turn up unexpectedly.
Guaranteed Pressings, and Printing
Great record, lousy pressing — there's nothing more frustrating. We've done everything we can to avoid the problem: a wonderful pressing plant, two-paper liners, sturdy boxes — and to insure against any problems, we'll guarantee the workmanship on all Mosaic's sets. If you have any technical defects with the records or the booklets, just return them to us for replacement.
Beautiful Packaging, Rich in Information
Photos from the era, comprehensive information on pertinent dates and artists, a special interview or essay, and a detailed discography are the mainstays of the fat sets of the Mosaic. Music makes it a point to be as much as we can to interest, inform and enlighten. And to design it all in a way that's pleasing to read and to own.
Limited Edition Pressings
At the end of each album description in this catalog, you will find the words "Limited to _____ copies worldwide." Once they are sold, we will never make them available again. Each set has our pledge of its authenticity, and will most certainly grow substantially in collectible value.
Value
With the quality and completeness of presentation, the collector might expect to pay a great deal for Mosaic collections. In fact, we're pleased to be able to present them at the very reasonable price of $9.00 per set.
Easy Ordering
You can order by mail or by phone, with VISA or MasterCard or by check or money order in U.S. currency. If you write, we'll invoice your credit card when we ship. Please remember to add $1.50 per set for postage and nails U.P.S.-AM ordering details are on the "Orders Now" page. We don't think ordering should be the hard part, so call if you have any questions 203-327-7111.

NEW RELEASES!!!
Why is the world ignoring Buddy DeFranco?
Name three bebop clarinetists. Everybody knows Buddy DeFranco, and maybe you can name Artie Shaw. But since bebop clarinet is his turf, DeFranco just gets lost completely.
DeFranco was a virtuoso on the instrument. A classicist till he discovered Goodman, DeFranco fell into the "new thing" on the road, when he and other testosterone swing musicians would transpose Parker's solos down in the basement.
He pushed the clarinet's limits.
DeFranco was constantly experimenting, pushing the limits of the instrument. He played George Russell's music, as Basie's septet, in his own ill-fated big band, then he went on the road with a quartet. Sonny Clark was the pianist (after Kenny Drew). It was one of the most tight-knit, lyrical, hard-swinging small groups recordings by this critical archive of bebop ever made.
Here are all the originally scattered and, until now, long-out-of-print recordings on The Complete Verve Recordings of The Buddy DeFranco Quartet featuring with Sonny Clark (MJG-112) (the fifth was the occasional collaborator Tal Farlow). Now, you can hear Buddy's remarkable facility and mastery of harmony and dynamics on "Lover Man" and Rodgers and Hodgers, as well as classics by Pritchard, Parker, Mulligan, Billy Taylor and more.
Complete and chronological.
A fact-record set, complete and in chronological sequence, including a 12-page booklet with a new essay by Ira Gitler, the original orange liner notes from the sessions, a new interview with DeFranco, and a discography. Limited to 7500 copies worldwide.
We've got a special affection for this music. If you don't know about Buddy DeFranco, pick up this set.
"Mosaic Records is bringing back to life a great deal of wonderful jazz that has not been available for quite a long time...The packaging, liner notes, discographies, mastering and pressing represent the state of the art for this kind of material...The series is a remarkable accomplishment and an extremely valuable one. Mosaic has set a standard for the industry to follow, and we can look forward to more marvelous music in the months and years to come."
Frank Driggs, Audio.
The first Bud Powell collection that isn't screwed up.
We'd be willing to bet 99% of the people investing in Bud Powell records own at least one Blue Note record. What has always puzzled us is the strange way the music has been released throughout the years.
Take Bud's very first session for the label. Up till now, the eight selected tracks recorded that incredible afternoon of innovation and inspiration have been available only on four different albums — never all together and in recorded sequence!
His most spectacular recordings.
So here at Mosaic we've done the only right thing. At last, it's possible to hear Bud's work complete, whole, and forever on The Complete Bud Powell Blue Note Recordings (1949-1953) (MJG-116). By universal assent, the Blue Notes are the most spectacular recordings Bud's recordings by this critical archive of bebop genius.
Ferocious, intricate, dignified, surprisingly joyful. This set conveys the sequence of Bud's first set for the label, and adds all of his 1953 date — two definitive performances — for the first time on one disc, in proper order. Included as well are a few relevant alternate take never before available with the original masters.
The Bandstand Blue Notes. Max Roach, Hallins, Ben Hayes, Mat Rauch, Art Taylor, Philly Joe Jones, George Duvivier, Sam Jones and Paul Chambers. Five albums, plus a 16-page booklet, with new reminiscences by Alfred Lion, analysis by Mark Gardner and Frank Wolff's unpublished photos of the actual sessions. Limited to 7500 copies worldwide. Hurry. As with all Mosaic sets, when this sells out, we won't press any more.
Swing's top soloists finally stretch out.
It was a little world caught between worlds.
In the mid-forties, a handful of the finest musicians to explore modern music but long wasn't the stuff for jazz used to ensembles and soloists. It turned to concertos, sweeter, allowing greater flexibility and solo space for musicians at the height of their abilities.
The Benny Morton and Jimmy Hamilton Blue Note Sessions (MJG-114), completes the roster of Blue Note's recordings in the album, (Chuck Wayne, Al Lucas, Specs Powell, Sonny Clark, Edmond Hall on the Blue Note Jazzmen collection). These enthralling chamber swing sessions captured the mood of one generation in the format of a newer one.
Like Ellington in miniature.
Jimmy Hamilton was the small-band it-out-er never solidly. Blue Note's Alfred Lion booked the date with Barney Bigard and Ben Webster — an austere tenorman, tenor, tenor-faced foe — like Ellington in miniature.
Jimmy Hamilton replaced Bigard in Ellington's 1942 band, and stayed 25 years. Throughout, he was a clarinet master of the woodwinds. On this session, he does most of the writing, and his writing is himself and late Ellington-compatible.
The album includes a trio date with Morton's accompanist, the wonderfully masterful Sammy Benskin. Half of his set appears for the very first time.
History and musical analysis by Stanley Dance. Limited to 7500 copies worldwide.

Bird told Miles and Dizzy, "You better watch out, there's a little white cat on the west coast who's gonna eat you up."
Chet Baker reports the quote himself, out of awe, not pride. He met Parker when the sax player was getting together a band in L.A. Every musician is in L.A. came down, and after Chet played two tunes, Parker cancelled all gigs and booked himself a born player.
What Parker recognized, what this release reveals, is that Chet Baker may have been one the most intuitive and important jazz musicians of his era.
He couldn't read a note. Didn't have a clue about chord structure and progressions. But had a fabulous ear for melody and complementary playing!
"Every take went someplace else."
It wasn't until we were preparing the Gerry Mulligan set (MJG-102) that his talent became obvious to us. Michael recalls: "The music totally floored me. Every take went some place else. Even on the same number, he never used an idea twice." Echoed on by Baker's sideman work. Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.
Night after night, Baker hopped off a bandstand with his only set being Russ Freeman's great compositions and him support. The Complete Chet Baker Quartet with Russ Freeman (MJG-113) is the evidence.
Newly-discovered sides.
This set gives you, for the first time on recorded live, four tracks from the Gerry Mulligan Quartet soundtrack album. The eight-page booklet offers an in-depth essay by Lee Goldberg, a 1953 article by Pacific Jazz owner Dick Bock, and William Claxton's photos of the actual events. Limited to 7500 pressings worldwide.
If you haven't enjoyed your own discovery of this remarkable trumpeter, clear a space and get ready to be floored.
"Sometimes I wonder whether today's trend collectors fully appreciate how remarkable these Mosaic sets are."
Stanley Dance, Jazz Times
First we'll tell you what we went through with Art Hodes -- then we'll tell you why.
If you think reissuing classic jazz is as easy as pulling a box off a shelf and pressing up some discs, get a load of what we went through with the Art Hodes Blue Note sessions.
First we had to transfer the original 16-inch wartime acetates to audio tape...
Those were compared to transfers made for reissues in 1952, in 1960, and a third set in the seventies. We even transferred 78s we could acquire for further study.
For phone orders, please call: 203-327-7111 9 AM - 6 PM, Monday - Saturday. VISA & Mastercard only.
Painstaking comparisons.
We made exhaustive A/B comparisons for every cut each time the cuts were released, just to see if the mastering engineers were getting better with each two-three sets. We're committed to the best even if it means throwing out our own work.
As for the accompanying booklet, let's just say, experience has taught us not to believe every printed word.
So how come all the interest in a pianist who recorded before World War II? Because Hodes is steeped in three important strains - he's been there from the start, he's a monumental figure in the blues. You can trace the lineage to contemporaries such as Ray Charles, Professor Longhair and Dr. John back to Art Hodes and New Orleans jazz.
Music unissued or rare sides.
How many Blue Note sets can be without the likes of Having The Complete Blue Note Art Hodes Sessions (MJG-101) without regret for profitability. Any applications?
Full of love and soul.
Here's why we want to keep this music alive. For John Hardee, it's that he's a great example of a forties musician working in New York -- in Carnegie Hall one night and a Bronx bar the next -- always shouting on his horn, full of love and soul and swing. For Bea Quebec, the reason's a little different: according to Michael, "Bea Quebec has been one of the few players who really touches my heart."
Both Hardee and Quebec came up at a critical time, when swing had swung and bop wasn't born. Hardee marked those years with these sessions including Tiny Grimes, Sammy Benskin, plus Sid Catlett, Jimmy Shirley, Gene Ramey, Tommy Young and others.
Quebec's innovation.
Quebec bridged the generations, from traditional jazz and boogie woogie into modern swing. While you're listening to the majesty of his timeless ballads, keep in mind his critical contributions in later years as a Blue Note A&R man, bringing Monk and Bud Powell and so many other performers to the label.
And yet, despite his innovative and taste, he never had a hit record. Not even a chart hit (or a draft). At least we have his sides with Tiny Grimes, Ram Ramirez, Milt Hinton, Buck Clayton, Trevor Glasse, Oscar Pettiford and more.
The set four discs including 14 unissued sides, 14 more available till now only on 78s and 28 only on various out-of-print anthologies. A 12-page booklet with essay by Stan Musgroves, newly researched biographies and rare photos. Limited to 5000 copies worldwide.
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"Mosaic cannot be praised too highly for reissuing this rare 40's output of two sadly neglected tenor men, with the Quebec spoke definitely proving his place alongside the tenor giants of jazz." Jazz Forum, Brian Davis
"The second batch from Mosaic Records, the specialist company directed by collectors for collectors, has maintained its impeccable introductory issue of three volumes documenting major jazz landmarks with, this time, four sets of equal perfection and historical significance."
Brian Davis, Jazz Forum.

STILL AVAILABLE
From the end of his career, Monk's Black Lion masterworks -- including a rare glimpse inside the mind of the man.
The years of staying true to his calling weren't easy for Thelonious Monk. By the late sixties, he was thrown over $200,000 in debt, the victim of Beatles-level and professional mania with a contrived group called The Giants of Jazz. It was financially, but not artistically, ravaging.
Magnificent solos and trios.
Then Orrin Keepnews, producing a recording session Monk made in London for Black Lion in December, 1971. Many Blue Notes were issued from this, but recordings as a leader, as typical of quality and inspiration as his first sessions for Blue Note.
Those pianistic tears do force you to test your ear for all the notion Monk sacrificed technique to serve his style.
All the solo and trio tracks he recorded on that one day, plus an extra quartet session a few days later, are in The Complete Black Lion and Vogue Recordings of Thelonious Monk (MJG-112).
First-ever with the press.
Also, for the first time recorded in that London studio is worth the price of the whole set alone.
It's a rare, unedited glimpse into a conversation Monk and pianist Junior Mance had on solo effects. Monk, being a composer, could not carry on even this small talk without experimenting with chords and melodies. What he played in total privacy is an unprecedented understanding of this great talent.
The set four albums, with seven unissued performances and several others previously hard to find. The 16-page booklet includes an in-depth essay by Ira Gitler, a 1958 article by Pacific Jazz owner Dick Bock, and William Claxton's photos of the actual events. Limited to 7500 pressings worldwide.
#4 Release of the Year
1976 choice from International Critic's Poll
"Makes the perfect companion volume to... The Complete Blue Note Thelonious Monk."
The Philadelphia Inquirer, Francis Davis
"...Captures Pepper's fertile form in 1956 and 1957...all these recordings ingle with vitality." People, Eric Levin
When jazz turned commercial, Mingus turned rebel. The fire of the times -- in these rare Candid recordings.
Let's turn back the clock to 1960. The times were turbulent, and so was the music. Mingus' contemporaneous Candid recordings, and given Charles' inner demons, they needed spirit and strength to go pressing with him.
In the spring, when Mingus and others were recording these sessions, Charles was touring the Newport Jazz Festival. Mingus launched a plan - The Newport Rebel Festival.
Critics and musicians hailed the event. Still hailing, Mingus hit the studio. The Complete Candid Recordings of Charles Mingus (MJG-111) was the result.
Rosenkrantz's musicians-slated.
Rosenkrantz has collaborators were elated. "Crank it!" Richmond yelled after one take. "I finally get to play it like I've been hearing it." And Dolphy said, "We never get together like this in the club."
Three sessions in all were recorded. The first added Lonnie Hillyer, Charles McPherson, Nico Bunink, Jimmy Knepper and Horace Washton. On another date, Grossman and Dolphy returned for three Booker Ervin and Paul Bley. Also that day, a remarkable jam was assembled -- Mingus with Richmond, and Dolphy, plus Jimmy Knepper, Jo Jones, Sonny Flanagan and Roy Eldridge! He told the band to play it like it's the young ones...forget the basics. They don't get all the way down into the music. You did, baby.
Includes unissued masterpieces.
Also included in The Complete Mingus Candid albums, seven titles issued only on anthologies and five unissued masterpieces. A 12-page booklet includes essays by Ira Gitler and Nat Hentoff's original notes and never-before-published photos. Limited to 7500 copies worldwide.
#1 (tied) Release of the Year
1976 choice from International Critic's Poll
"This may be the most valuable item in Mosaic's catalog so far."
Phil A. Evans, Leonard Feather
"...you probably have the original albums, but don't let that deter you from locking into this four record set on Mosaic...superb sound and annotation and five previously unreleased tracks."
Steven Rosatto, Chico Allentown
His tone could fill the Polo Grounds -- one of the first outstanding jazz soloists, Sidney Bechet.
New Orleans, teaming with culture from many nations, gave birth to Bechet and his sound. It also filled him with the urge to travel. He stomped 'round the world while still in his twenties. Russia, Egypt. He played for the King of England, lounged around in harems, was a Harlem speakeasy, did time in Paris...
He was all over the place, making every musical color count.
An unfolding improviser.
Because of the orthodox lumber he played with in his clarinets, before Blue Note, Bechet was limited by his astonishing ability to improvise. The Complete Blue Note Recordings of Sidney Bechet (MJG-104) is a reminder of his substantial power. Here, he's in a small group setting, and the energy never seemed to the chord runs of New Orleans music. Perhaps his gift for melody encouraged him to work closely with the structures and less with clutter, and he was the first true master of the instrument.
New transfers and clarity.
Bechet appeared on 13 sessions for Blue Note. Mosaic's producers chose 75 selections. Mosaic presents them on six records, many tracks pressed from new clear transfers to bring out new clarity. Including 11 unissued tracks and four titles previously available only on 10-inch LPs or 78s.
The 16-page booklet includes a bio by John Chilton, musical analysis by Max Harrison, a full discography, rare photos and Blue Note cover art from the forties. Limited to 7500 copies worldwide.
#3 (tied) Release of the Year
1976 choice from International Critic's Poll
"Here worth... cannot really convey the overall excellence of the jazz music contained in this Mosaic six-LP album."
Mississippi Rag, John Nelson
"... a rare opportunity to hear [Charlie Christian] on acoustic guitar instead of the electric instrument to which he is associated."
The New York Times, John S. Wilson
They were called the 'Blue Note Jazzmen' -- any one of them was capable of calling the shots.
One day the session would be Edmond Hall's All Stars, another day would feature James P. Johnson's Blue Note Jazzmen. On a third date, it's Vic Dickenson with Ed Hall's Orange. A fourth, and Sidney De Paris' Blue Note Stompers had booked the room.
They were the earliest of an early Blue Note roster of jazz greats, and they're all here on The Complete Blue Note Recordings of Edmond Hall's Celeste Jazzmen/Sidney De Paris' Blue Note Stompers/James P. Johnson (MJG-106).
Hall virtually talked on his clarinet.
De Paris was reputedly one of the toughest trumpeters to cut in Harlem jam sessions.
Dickenson didn't just participate in tradition, he nearly was one all by himself, swaying strict or trombone-most days of the week.
"The greatest pianist."
And who was the greatest pianist in jazz? According to Duke, Basie, Hines, Tatum, Fats, and Willie "The Lion" Smith, it was Johnson, the great stride pianist who was such an important transitional figure between ragtime and jazz.
While each leader's style was individualistic, you can hear the roots of modern mainstream jazz in the dates they shared. Sidemen include Charlie Christian, Red Norvo, Teddy Wilson, Harry Carney and Ben Webster.
A festival of styles.
Get ready for a festival of New Orleans, stride, swing, Kansas City and every combination in between. This does, including 16 previously unissued tracks, 14 more available till now only on 78s, all the rest available only on LPs. With a 12-page booklet containing new, corrected discographical information, essays by Max Harrison and Dan Morgenstern and reproductions of several Blue Note LP jackets and pamphlets from the series. Limited to 5000 copies worldwide.
"A new standard for reissues! A model of systematic intelligence. The sound is first class...a state of the art matter."
Dan Morgenstern, down beat.
One of the earliest 'Super Sessions' created Blue Note's first hit.
Boogie woogie piano was the first love of Mr. Alfred Lion, who gave up stereotyped in 1938 to record Albert Ammons and Meade Lux Lewis.
The third session on his fledgling label was an all-star boogie woogie date. Lion's choices: Ammons, Lewis, Pete Johnson, Sidney Bechet, Newton J.C. Higginbotham on trombone, Edmond Hall on clarinet, Jimmy Williams, drummer Sid Catlett and pianist Albert Ammons.
All their classic 78s, all together.
The Complete Port of Harlem Jazzmen (MJG-108) includes all their 78s, cut on two separate days in December, 1939, plus two unissued Ammons and Sidney Bechet as clarinet and soprano sax).
We get to appreciate the wailing orchestrations by Bechet, the buzzing, colorful statements by Newton, Basie's drama, Higginbotham's cool-headedness, Johnson and Lewis's and all together, making straight jazz unexpectedly exciting.
A real treat -- "Summertime", with Bechet on soprano sax, Ammons on piano, Johnson in an hours as Blue Note's first hit.
Our album with 10 tracks, three appearing for the first time since the days of 78s. The seven others appeared previously across five different albums. Attractive gatefold includes discographies, an essay by Stanley Dance and rare photos from the session. Limited to 5000 copies worldwide.
In order to be complete in each cast, this album and the Sidney Bechet set (MJG-106) duplicate three selections.)
#3 (tied) Release of the Year
Above four International Critic's Poll)
"An extraordinary number of good jazz recordings were made in 1939. These include Count Basie's "Dickies Dream", Duke Ellington's "Jeeps Blues" and "Echoes of Harlem", Coleman Hawkins' "Body and Soul"... and Billie Holiday's "Fine and Mellow". But none of these surpass the Port of Harlem Jazzmen recordings."
The New Yorker, Whitney Balliett

Time out: Here's a personal pitch for one of the greatest tenor players who ever lived.
What we need here at Mosaic is a patron -- someone who will just dump bags of money at the door and let us put out records like The Complete Blue Note Forties Recordings of Bo Quebec and John Hardee (MJG-102) without regard for profitability. Any applications?
Full of love and soul.
Here's why we want to keep this music alive. For John Hardee, it's that he's a great example of a forties musician working in New York -- in Carnegie Hall one night and a Bronx bar the next -- always shouting on his horn, full of love and soul and swing. For Bea Quebec, the reason's a little different: according to Michael, "Bea Quebec has been one of the few players who really touches my heart."
Both Hardee and Quebec came up at a critical time, when swing had swung and bop wasn't born. Hardee marked those years with these sessions including Tiny Grimes, Sammy Benskin, plus Sid Catlett, Jimmy Shirley, Gene Ramey, Tommy Young and others.
Quebec's innovation.
Quebec bridged the generations, from traditional jazz and boogie woogie into modern swing. While you're listening to the majesty of his timeless ballads, keep in mind his critical contributions in later years as a Blue Note A&R man, bringing Monk and Bud Powell and so many other performers to the label.
And yet, despite his innovative and taste, he never had a hit record. Not even a chart hit (or a draft). At least we have his sides with Tiny Grimes, Ram Ramirez, Milt Hinton, Buck Clayton, Trevor Glasse, Oscar Pettiford and more.
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"Mosaic cannot be praised too highly for reissuing this rare 40's output of two sadly neglected tenor men, with the Quebec spoke definitely proving his place alongside the tenor giants of jazz." Jazz Forum, Brian Davis
"Phantom Album" mystery solved!
How is one that stumped collectors for years. Catalogs listed it -- issue shows displays pictured its cover. Yet no one had ever seen or heard the album.
The artist was Harold Floyd "Tiny" Brooks, a fiery tenor player who appeared frequently as a Blue Note sideman, writer and arranger.
The missing album? Something called "Back to the Tracks" -- recorded, designed, engraved, catalogued, full-stopped.
His proverbial style.
No one knows why, except these were busy years at Blue Note. Finally he's getting his due, this style, relatively unsung but whose powerful style dictated firmly to the blues and gospel. "Back to the Tracks" is just one of two unissued albums, plus two non-star discs, compiled as The Complete Blue Note Recordings of the Tina Brooks Quintets (MJG-105).
Personal solos, distinctive horn-voicings, clear, melodic compositions -- Tina did it all. This mystery ends in a discovery more rewarding than ever imagined.
The four albums feature Art Blakey, Lee Morgan, Curtis Fuller, Sonny Clark, Wilbur Mitchell, Wilbur Ware, Paul Chambers and Jackie McLean. Plus, there's a 16-page booklet with newly-researched biography by Michael Cuscuna, analysis by Robert Palmer, complete discography, and many unpublished photos, including a shot of the unissued "Back to the Tracks" cover. Limited to 7500 copies worldwide.
#2 (tied) Release of the Year
1980 choice from International Critic's Poll
"an unacknowledged master."
The Times of London, Richard Williams
"one of the gems of the series."
L.A. Herald Examiner, Mikal Gilmore
"Included is his rare 'Time Blue', one of the greatest albums Blue Note ever released."
Newsweek, Jim Miller
Here's one L.A. altoist with no N.Y. comparison -- pure Pepper at his peak.
It's the controversy rage forever! Or will people just smile presscriptions and open up their ears?
Sure. Now, New York says the coarse and L.A. echoed the developments, but when it comes to Art Pepper only geography separated him from the innovators.
Pepper never fully adapted to the cooked-out west coast style. His phrasing was jagged and bluesy, his tone was unmistakably contemporary, his time fell and rich. You can point to any phrase between with elements of his playing, but all together they belonged only to him.
Control, precision, emotion.
He could move readily between blowing dates and big band charts, with solos full of spontaneous fragments that still managed to relate meaningfully to the whole. Pepper's genius is his art, perhaps echoing his troubled nature -- the form emitted and precision, balanced by intense personal emotion.
He was working extensively with Chet Baker, occasionally with fellow saxophonist Jimmy Heath's arrangements, during the late fifties. These performances were made during the most important year of his music, when he was truly striking out on his own.
Collected for the first time.
The Complete Pacific Jazz Small Group Recordings of Art Pepper (MJG-103) introduces a number of tracks never before available or released only in edited versions. Included are two never-released tunes from the 1956 "Art" date that could be heard until now only by possessing the different albums; the Shorty Rogers sweet-faire date; rare encounters with Bill Perkins. Sidemen include Phil Urso, Richie Kamuca, Pete Jolly, Jimmy Rowles, Russ Freeman and Shelley Manne. The eight-page booklet includes an essay by Michael James, photos from original recording sessions and newly discovered discographical information. Limited to 7500 copies worldwide.
#3 (tied) Release of the Year
1980 choice from International Critic's Poll)
"This set stretches the 5-star rating to its outermost limits." The L.A. Times, Leonard Feather
"That it belongs in every jazz record collection should go without saying."
Musician Magazine, Francis Davis

Meet Clifford Brown, just before his big break.
Can Clifford Brown have made all that recorded music in less than a decade? Sometimes it takes researching anthologies like this to realize it.
Between Lionel Hampton's "Jazz Giants" and Max Roach's "Jazz Study" sessions, he's a busy man.
Then there's the "Brownie" sessions, with Gene Roland's arrangements, during the late fifties.
These performances were made during the most important year of his music, when he was truly striking out on his own.
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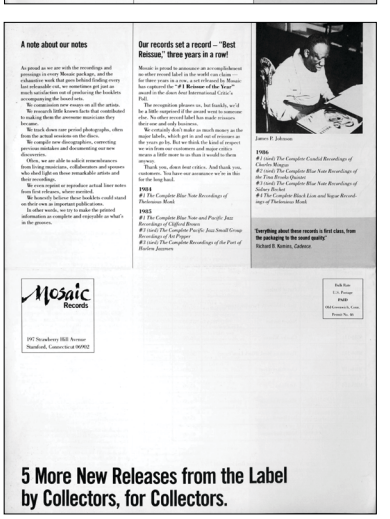
"...captures Pepper's fertile form in 1956 and 1957...all these recordings ingle with vitality." People, Eric Levin
Mosaic without Albert Ammons and Meade Lux Lewis? That would be like jazz without the jive!
They played whenever they could -- in small rural bob bars, at rent parties, at bops. The audience wanted dance music, and they got it. Rolling along on eclectic upright in echoey halls, these solo pianists had to hang it out right for the bar to people could hear the music.
Boogie woogie reappraised.
Now, the world is set for a complete reappraisal of their recorded work. Mosaic has discovered all the original takes from January 6, 1939 -- the very first Blue Note session, when Ammons and Lewis were at the height of their renown as pianists. Those tracks reveal all known discographies, and Mosaic's set, The Complete Blue Note and Solo Recordings of Albert Ammons and Meade Lux Lewis (MJG-101).
Rarities and new discoveries.
Assessing and comparing the talents of Lewis and Ammons is easier now that the Mosaic-assembled, chronologically, to-one package. Hear nine Ammons solos, 23 Lewis solos, including previously unissued alternate takes. Three discs, with eight tracks previously unissued, 13 available till now only on noisy 78s, 10 available only on rare 10-inch LPs. With a 12-page booklet containing new, corrected discographical information, essays by Max Harrison and Dan Morgenstern and reproductions of several Blue Note LP jackets and pamphlets from the series. Limited to 5000 copies worldwide.
"There's no better sample of classic boogie and blues piano available than this issue, and the sound transferred is marvelously handled."
San Francisco Examiner, Phillip Elwood
"One of the 25 Best Listening of the Year' albums of 1985." Newsweek
"This set is one to invest in immediately."
Jazz Times, Stanley Dance
For phone orders, please call:
203-327-7111
9 AM - 6 PM, Monday - Saturday.
VISA & Mastercard only, please.


A note about our notes
As proud as we are with the recordings and pressings in every Mosaic package, and the beautiful booklets that grace Mosaic's sliding every last reasonable cut, we sometimes get just as much satisfaction out of producing the booklets accompanying the boxed sets.
We commission new essays on all the artists. We research little known facts that contributed to making them the awesome musicians they became.
We track down rare period photographs, often from the actual sessions on the days.
We compile new discographies, correcting previous mistakes and documenting our new discoveries.
Often, we are able to solicit reminiscences from living musicians, collaborators and spouses who shed light on those remarkable artists and their remarkable music.
In other words, we try to impart as printed information as complete and enjoyable as what's in the grooves.
Our records set a record -- "Best Reissue," three years in a row!
Mosaic is proud to announce an accomplishment no other record label in the world can claim: three years in a row, we've released the album that has captured the "#1 Release of the Year" award in the down-beat International Critic's Poll.
The recognition pleases us, but frankly, we'd be a little surprised if the award went to someone else. No other record label has made reissues the way we have made them.
We consider both artists and musical moments as the subjects, and we've been lucky enough over the years go by. But we think the kind of respect we win from our customers and major critics means a little more to us than it would to those anyway.
Thank you, down-beat critics. And thank you, customers. You have our assurance we're in this for the long haul.
1984
#1 The Complete Blue Note and Hard Bop Recordings of Clifford Brown.)
#1 (tied) The Complete Pacific Jazz Small Group Recordings of Art Pepper.)
#1 (tied) The Complete Recordings of the Port of Harlem Jazzmen
1985
#1 The Complete Blue Note Recordings of Thelonious Monk
1985
#1 The Complete Blue Note and Solo Recordings of Albert Ammons and Meade Lux Lewis (MJG-101)
Rarities and new discoveries.
Assessing and comparing the talents of Lewis and Ammons is easier now that the Mosaic-assembled, chronologically, to-one package. Hear nine Ammons solos, 23 Lewis solos, including previously unissued alternate takes. Three discs, with eight tracks previously unissued, 13 available till now only on noisy 78s, 10 available only on rare 10-inch LPs. With a 12-page booklet containing new, corrected discographical information, essays by Max Harrison and Dan Morgenstern and reproductions of several Blue Note LP jackets and pamphlets from the series. Limited to 5000 copies worldwide.
1986
#1 (tied) The Complete Candid Recordings of Charles Mingus
#1 (tied) The Complete Blue Note Recordings of the Tina Brooks Quintet
#1 (tied) The Complete Blue Note Recordings of Sidney Bechet
#1 The Complete Black Lion and Vogue Recordings of Thelonious Monk
Everything about these records is first class, from the packaging to the sound quality."
Richard S. Kennies, Cadence
Mosaic Records
197 Strawberry Hill Avenue
Stamford, Connecticut 06902
Tenth Year
U.S. Postage
PAID
Old Greenwich, Conn.
Permit No. 46
5 More New Releases from the Label by Collectors, for Collectors.

Written by Alan Goodman Design by Corey & Co. Boston Account & production management: Jessica Wolf

MOSAIC RECORDS

Herman Leonard

Mosaic

BROCHURE
No. 4

Thelonious Monk

Five new additions to "One of the best kept secrets in all of pop or jazz".* Mosaic Records Limited Editions. *Mikal Gilmore, *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*

This is Mosaic's fourth brochure. It's a lot bigger than anything we've previously sent out because we want it to serve a variety of purposes: to tell you about our five new limited editions; introduce newcomers to who we are and what we're doing; and answer some of the questions most often asked by our growing family of customers and friends.

When we first started Mosaic, *down beat's* Dan Morgenstern called us "a brilliant idea". Now, after three years of struggling, we feel like an idea whose time has come!

1984 -1985

Michael Cuscuna Charlie Lourie

We were damned lucky at Fred/Alan, able to work with clients that had exceptional vision, and often, wonderful taste. Case in point:

Mosaic Records.

While we were in college radio, Alan worked with Michael Cuscuna, soon to become one of the medium's most revered producers and the leading reissue producer in history. In the late '70s Fred was producing jazz records and became friendly with Michael too. In 1983, Michael and former Blue Note/Columbia/Warner Records executive Charlie Lourie started the pioneering Mosaic Records as the first company specializing in boxed set reissues of classic performances, available only by mail order. We became reacquainted when Fred ordered their first set ("The Complete Blue Note Recordings of Thelonious Monk") and Michael asked Fred/Alan to get involved with helping them out of the hole. It turned out their 'sure thing' idea wasn't having as many takers as they needed and the company was worried about the possibility of shutting down.

We turned them down two years in a row with a lot of unsolicited advice about what they could do better. Fred/Alan was still pretty new and running on a shoestring, so even though we loved what Mosaic stood for we just didn't have the time and resources they needed. Everything we knew about direct mail cataloging was from being mail order catalog customers ourselves and from a direct mail how-to book Fred had read (at least the first chapter). We admired what Michael and Charlie were trying to accomplish at Mosaic, so we did our best to help out without jumping all the way in.

A couple years later Fred/Alan was doing a little better and Mosaic was doing a lot worse; Michael and Charlie successfully prevailed on us to finally help. We were still ignorant about direct mail, but pretty much like every other assignment we ever had we took on Mosaic Records with the full arrogance of youth.

Alan had started working with a first generation portable computer and at the picnic table of our summer rental we invented the first Mosaic 12-page brochure. Alan wrote every word, our friends Tom Corey and Scott Nash designed the thing, Fred/Alan mainstay Jessica Wolf supervised the production and printing. The first catalog ever dropped in the autumn mail of 1986.

With direct mail, there's direct feedback from people. If the phone rings they like it, if not, it's back to the drawing board. We patiently waited for the order phones to ring, and lo and behold, in the first three weeks Mosaic's business had increased 10 fold and over the years it went up from there. They've been in business ever since. We've never been prouder of any project. So proud, in fact, that Alan continues writing all new release copy 30 years after Fred/Alan closed, and former Fred/Alan CFO Fred Pustay is now the Mosaic co-owner.

Fred/Alan was proud of most of our work with clients, but Mosaic wrapped together a number of threads that went through all everything we believed in:

• Our perspective was that Mosaic Records is more than a bunch of wonderful box record sets, it was an inspiration and alchemy of artistic and business values. The "promises" described in each and every brochure have been kept for over 30 years. Now, that's a "brand."

• Like Mosaic's founders, Fred/Alan believed in the fans, and we always worked on projects that revolved around what is now talked about as "fandom" or "community." Mosaic epitomized it, and we made sure their fans were front and center in all our work for the company. So much so that Brochure #6 was entirely composed of fan letters and critic quotes, thanks to our collaborator Marty Pekar's inventiveness. It doesn't get better than your customers doing all the work.

• And of course, we helped sell more Mosaic boxes, ensuring Michael's and Charlie's vision of exposing some of America's greatest art throughout the world.

Both of us, Alan and Fred, have continued to work to help Mosaic for 30+ years. Alan continues to write all the new release copy, Fred helped them start the Mosaic Daily Jazz Gazette. Jessica Wolf helped them throughout the days of an actual printed brochure, and the Fred/Alan CFO, Fred Pustay, became their partner and eventually, with Scott Wenzel, the co-owner.

Mosaic Records and their mission lives on. We're honored to have been a small part of it.

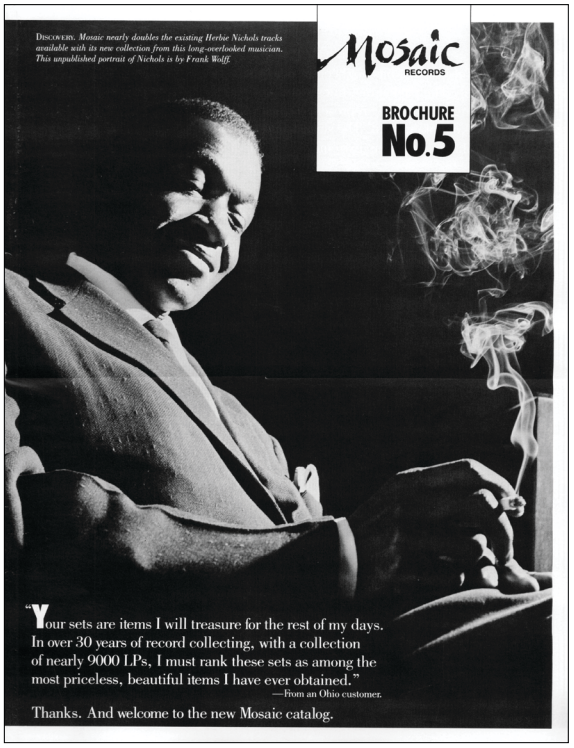
Mosaic Records, Stamford, Connecticut

Brochure development:
Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert
Account management & production:
Jessica Wolf

Brochure No. 4 (previous pages)
Designed by
Tom Corey & Scott Nash,
Corey McPherson Nash, Boston
Written by Alan Goodman

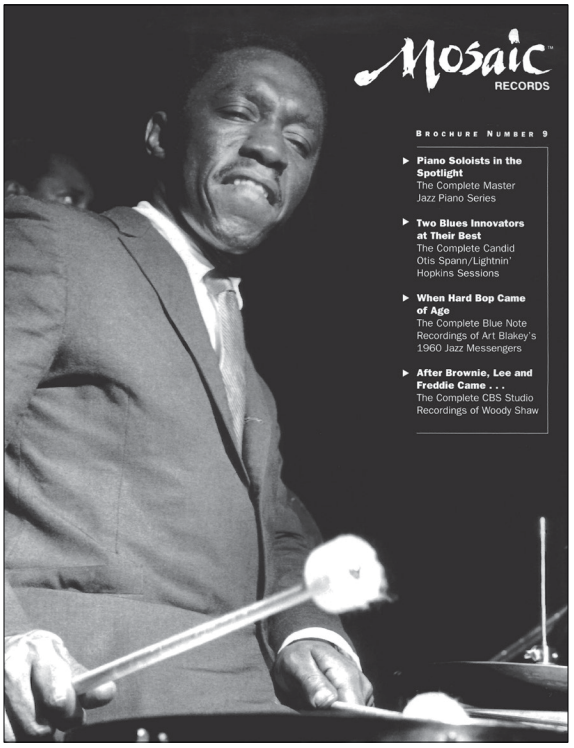
Brochures No. 5-11 (next two pages)
Written by Alan Goodman, with
Marty Pekar and Juli Davidson

Mosaic Images Brochure (176 & 177)
Written by Alan Goodman
Designed by Noel Frankel


Mosaic
RECORDS
BROCHURE
No.5
DISCOVERY. Mosaic nearly doubles the existing Herbie Nichols tracks available with its new collection from this long-overlooked musician. This unpublished portrait of Nichols is by Frank Wolff.
"Your sets are items I will treasure for the rest of my days. In over 30 years of record collecting, with a collection of nearly 9000 LPs, I must rank these sets as among the most priceless, beautiful items I have ever obtained."
—From an Ohio customer.
Thanks. And welcome to the new Mosaic catalog.

Mosaic
RECORDS
BROCHURE
No.6
NEW INSIDE:
The Complete Johnny Hodges Recordings, 1951-1955
The Complete Cecil Taylor/Buell Neidlinger Candid Sessions
The Complete Atlantic and EMI Jazz Recordings of Shorty Rogers
The Complete Freddie Redd Blue Note Sessions
Mosaic CDs – Here At Last
SHOCKING – There's no other way to describe the sound of Cecil Taylor to 1960 ears. Even though his music contained echoes of Monk and Ellington, Taylor virtually launched the avant garde with recordings like his Candid recordings with Buell Neidlinger. Now here's another shock – half the music was never released until now. Photograph by Charles Stewart.

Mosaic
RECORDS
NEW SETS. NEW DISCOVERIES.
The Complete Dean Benedetti Recordings of Charlie Parker
The Complete Recordings of T-Bone Walker 1940-1954
The Complete Blue Note Recordings of George Lewis
The Complete Recordings of the Stan Getz Quintet with Jimmy Raney
The Complete Blue Note Recordings of Grant Green with Sonny Clark
NEW RELEASES. AVAILABLE ON YOUR CHOICE OF LP OR CD.
SPRING/SUMMER 1990 BROCHURE NUMBER 7
THREE DEUCES Presents
CHARLIE PARKER
AND HIS BAND
featuring
DAVIS
TRUMPET
MAX ROACH
DRUMS
KE JORDAN
PIANO
TOMMY POTTER
LOST... AND FOUND! Unless you took the advice of Pincus, unofficial "mayor of 52nd Street," and entered the smoky Three Deuces Club, you've never heard the music on Mosaic's new set. The Complete Dean Benedetti Recordings of Charlie Parker. These are live-on-location recordings, long-rumored to exist, from the very moments Parker was inventing the future. Finally discovered, finally catalogued and annotated, finally available. Finally you can hear them. Photograph (from 1948) by William P. Gottlieb.

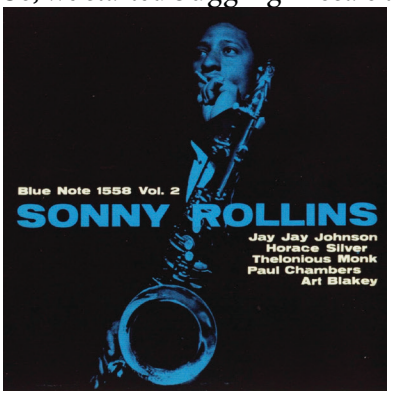


Mosaic Records Brochures #5-11
Written by Alan Goodman, with Marty Pekar and Juli Davidson
Account management & production by Jessica Wolf

As great photography fans, and like a lot of other music nerds, we were enamored with the jazz photographers like Roy DeCarava, Herman Leonard, William Gottlieb and particularly Blue Note Records co-founder Francis "Frank" Wolff. Imagine how excited we were when Mosaic's founders, Michael Cuscuna and Charlie Lourie –by far, our favorite friends and clients– told us that they had taken ownership of the entire Francis Wolff photography archive*. After all, he'd shot virtually every Blue Note recording session from 1944 until 1967, even after the company was sold to Liberty Records in 1965.

Fred: "I had started doing a little collecting of jazz photography –probably due to our deep dive into Mosaic, and the shrinking size of CD covers– with non-vintage prints by William Claxton, Roy DeCrava, and Chuck Stewart. It was obvious that the Frank Wolff library would be a fantastic addition to the body of jazz work starting to exhibit around the world."

So, we started bugging Mosaic to think about expanding their line from just their amazing, historically necessary box sets to amazing, historically necessary photographic history. In 1991, Charlie and Michael agreed and launched Mosaic Images. Fred/Alan created one of their most beautiful catalogs, and photography became a critical part of Mosaic's business for 30 years.



Now came the rigorous and joyous work of actually living up to the promise of a world class offering. Michael and Charlie selected three iconic photos featured on three classic Blue Notes –John Coltrane on "Blue Train," Sonny Rollins on "Volume 2," and Art Blakey on "The Big Beat"–and did the deep dive research that helped make Mosaic famous. We engaged one of the last analog "master printers," Chuck Kelton's Kelton Labs, to produce the limited edition prints. And since high priced photography was new to the mainstream jazz public, we also decided to release high quality, limited edition posters of the photographs at a lower price. Alan's background as a journalist –with a unique sensitivity to artists and a pitch perfect writing talent– made the catalog copy sparkle and Jessica Wolf produced one of our most gorgeous brochures, with printing and paper quality that gave readers the assurance that Mosaic Editions was all about quality.

Needless to say, things worked out beautifully, in all ways. Jazz fans from across the world responded overwhelmingly and Mosaic Images was on fire.

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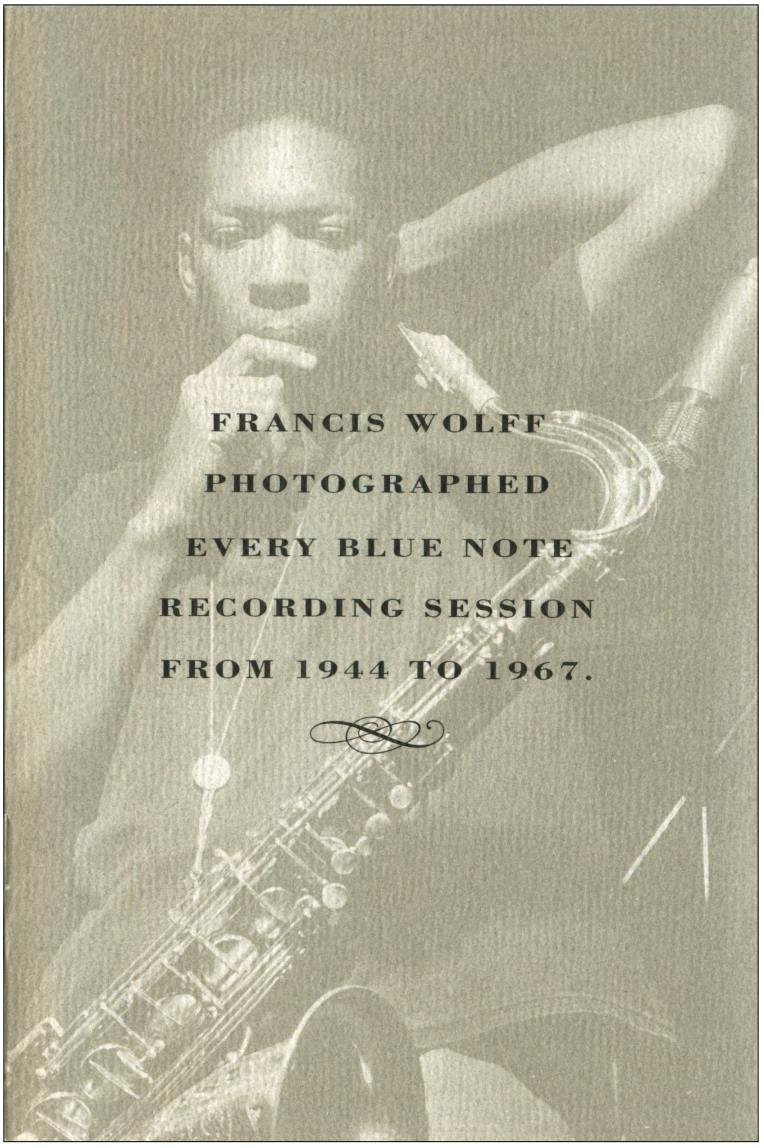
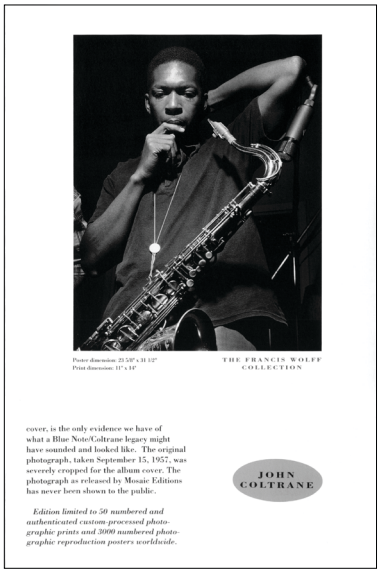
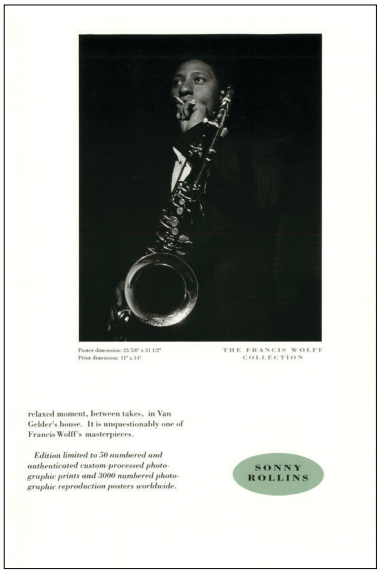
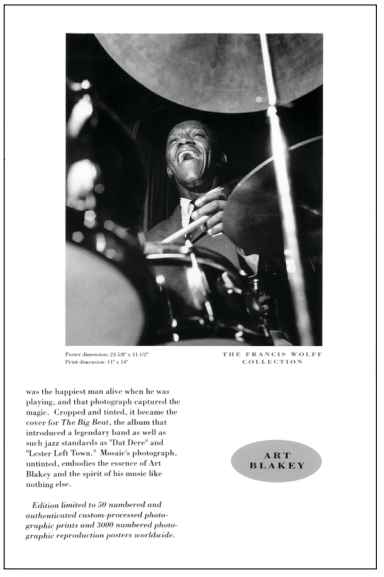
* Update: Mosaic Images started with our 1991 catalog. In 2022, the Francis Wolff archive was acquired by the Universal Music Group, the current owner of Blue Note Records.




Poster dimension: 23 5/8" x 31 1/2"
Print dimension: 11" x 14"
THE FRANCIS WOLFF COLLECTION
cover, is the only evidence we have of what a Blue Note/Coltrane legacy might have sounded and looked like. The original photograph, taken September 15, 1957, was severely cropped for the album cover. The photograph as released by Mosaic Editions has never been shown to the public.
Edition limited to 50 numbered and authenticated custom-processed photographic prints and 3000 numbered photographic reproduction posters worldwide.
JOHN COLTRANE


Poster dimension: 23 5/8" x 31 1/2"
Print dimension: 11" x 14"
THE FRANCIS WOLFF COLLECTION
relaxed moment, between takes, in Van Gelder's house. It is unquestionably one of Francis Wolff's masterpieces.
Edition limited to 50 numbered and authenticated custom-processed photographic prints and 3000 numbered photographic reproduction posters worldwide.
SONNY ROLLINS


Poster dimension: 23 5/8" x 31 1/2"
Print dimension: 11" x 14"
THE FRANCIS WOLFF COLLECTION
was the happiest man alive when he was playing, and that photograph captured the magic. Cropped and tinted, it became the cover for The Big Beat, the album that introduced a legendary band as well as such jazz standards as "Dat Dere" and "Lester Left Town." Mosaic's photograph, untinted, embodies the essence of Art Blakey and the spirit of his music like nothing else.
Edition limited to 50 numbered and authenticated custom-processed photographic prints and 3000 numbered photographic reproduction posters worldwide.
ART BLAKEY

Design by Noel Frankel Written by Alan Goodman Account management & production by Jessica Wolf

Nick-at-Nite logo designed by Tom Corey & Scott Nash Corey & Co. Boston

1985 -1992

NICK at NITE

THE GREATEST HITS OF TELEVISION

and

TV Land

America's first oldies television network.

Fred/Alan invented **Nick-at-Nite** and **TV Land**. That is, Fred and Alan.

It's funny to see it in print. Bill Paley created CBS, the Columbia Broadcasting Company, Ted Turner invented CNN, the Cable News Network, John Lack conceived of MTV: Music Television. But, there it is. Two guys most people never heard of invented America's first oldies channel on television.

By mid-1985 we had developed the branding and vocabulary for MTV and Nickelodeon. MTV Networks CEO Bob Pittman asked Nick's president, Gerry Laybourne, to figure out what to do with the dark hours after Nickelodeon went off the air at 8pm*. Gerry and her team worked to develop original programming for a number of months before throwing in the towel and asking us for suggestions.

We were ready. A couple of years before, Pittman had purchased the rights to 275 episodes of "The Donna Reed Show," a black & white comedy series from the late 1950s because they were cheap and he thought they might be useful someday; I'd heard about the acquisition and started hatching up ways to use them. When we became independent producers in 1983 we spent over a year trying to convince ABC to create a "TV oldies" block in their daytime hours. They eventually passed. "We're a television network. We can't run old, black and white shows!"

So, when Nick came calling we had worked out the whole thing in our heads. We could run an entire network with programming that no one else wanted, but was solid enough to get a good rating. Perfect for the audience and perfect for advertisers. Our channel would be the television equivalent of oldies radio, the most successful format in decades. Just like "The Greatest Hits of All Time" we wouldn't try to hide what we were. The networks might have reruns (sad face), but at Nick-at-Nite we'd be RERUNS!!! (happy face!). It would be a blast.

The powers that be at Nickelodeon did not like "The Donna Reed Show" at all; it was seen as a pre-feminist throwback that set a depressing role model. Fred had watched it for weeks at a time in high school during an illness, and figured any show that could hold the attention of a high school boy for that long had to be, at the very least, entertaining.

We convinced them to give it a go. They could look for shows that fit the criminally low budget, were good (meaning strong characters and solid stories), promote it all under the same guidance we were giving to Nickelodeon and MTV, and go for it. No one was sure what we were smoking, but after our last ditch presentation to Bob was met with smiles and enthusiasm, they agreed to let us at it.

The two of us spent everyday for months at Nickelodeon lining things up (though we were still 'outsiders' we effectively served as the channel's creative directors for the next seven years). Programming chief Debby Beece came up with the

name 'Nick-at-Nite;' and she licensed a great debut line-up of Donna Reed, "My Three Sons" (the black & white years), "Mr. Ed," and "Route 66." Tom Corey and Scott Nash had already designed the Nickelodeon logo, so we tapped them again. We had a couple of bumps with our Nick promo team, the most important element in our scheme, because a couple of them were smarter-than-thou and thought oldies TV was the dumbest idea in creation. We convinced them by pointing out we didn't think we were doing great art, just "good TV" (eventually one of our cornerstone promises to the audience). Scott Webb, Bob Mittenthal, Jay Newell, Jim Levi and Will McRobb, among others, wholeheartedly committed to our vision and created some of the most memorable and outlandish packaging a television network had ever seen. (For instance, to promote a "Donna Reed Show" marathon, they had a contest to have 30 women dress up as a "typical" TV housewife, that is... Donna.)

Nick-at-Nite was an instant success. Within months it was the #1 cable network in prime time. It started being referenced in the popular culture, and became the shorthand for retro culture. In competitive research Nick-at-Nite got credit for any old program a viewer liked, no matter where it ran on TV. And, it paved the way for Nick spinning off the 24 hour TV Land (Alan's first "positioning" for NAN "HELLO OUT THERE... FROM TV LAND!").

In many ways, Nick-at-Nite was one of Fred/Alan's most satisfying triumphs. Creating success where most everyone else thought we had nothing. It doesn't get any better.

Alan: At the time, David Letterman's first late night show at 12:35 am was relatively new, and I was a massive fan. I always enjoyed his stand-up, and had watched his very strange daytime show, but it was his *Late Late Show* that sealed his contribution to the history of comedy, and his innovations can't be overstated.

The most striking element to me was how gleefully the show embraced all the worn-out, overplayed staples of late night with an ironic "we know, it's just stupid TV" attitude. Coupled with that was their relentless devotion to bits that weren't on the face of them funny, but became funny because they just wouldn't stop doing them. I remember distinctly referencing Letterman in the pitch to the network for Nick at Nite. "Letterman's show isn't just a late night talk show. It's a late night talk show ABOUT a late night talk show." Today, we would use the word "meta" to describe what he was doing, but we didn't have that word yet.

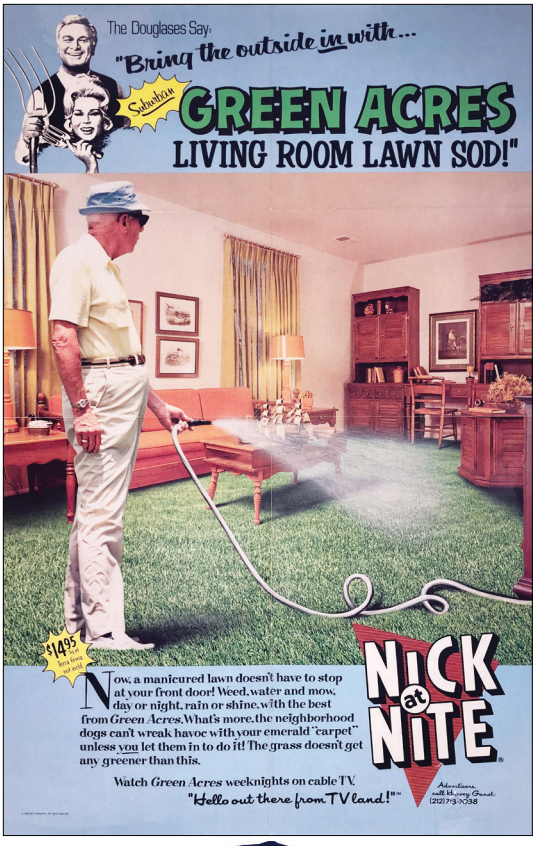
"We're going to be a television network about a television network." You guided the team to make things that seemed like promos, but were more about being short-form entertainment. I'll always remember Jim Levi's spot for Donna Reed where the characters are all proclaiming their love for each other, edited from different episodes, ending with Donna saying "I love cheese." That was the essence of what we were trying to achieve as far as I was concerned and certainly nothing like what other networks were doing.

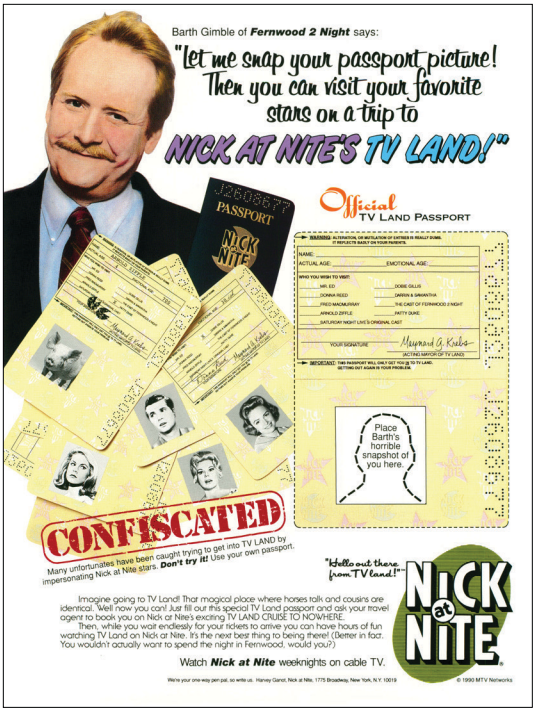
Nick-at-Nite was where we really cemented the value of establishing a

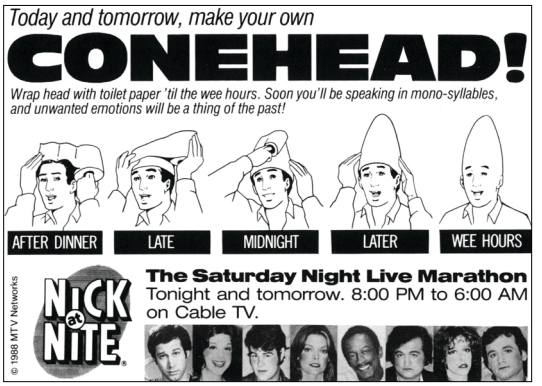
brand. I remember when we got "F Troop." One day, it was on TBS doing no ratings. The next day – literally the next day – it was on Nick at Nite and it was a total winner. It wasn't the show. It was that we had established the right home for it.

.....

* Back in the day, satellite transponders were scarce and extremely expensive; Nickelodeon leased their nighttime hours to the ARTS channel. When they got their own 24 hour berth and be came A&E the cost was too much for Nick to bear without hope for revenue.


The Douglases Say:
"Bring the outside in with...
Sebastian
GREEN ACRES
LIVING ROOM LAWN SOD!"
$14.95
Now, a manicured lawn doesn't have to stop at your front door! Weed, water and mow, day or night, rain or shine, with the best from Green Acres. What's more, the neighborhood dogs can't wreak havoc with your emerald "carpet" unless you let them in to do it! The grass doesn't get any greener than this.
Watch Green Acres weeknights on cable TV.
"Hello out there from TV Land!"
NICK at NITE


Barth Gimble of Fernwood 2 Night says:
"Let me snap your passport picture! Then you can visit your favorite stars on a trip to
NICK AT NITE'S TV LAND!"
Official TV LAND PASSPORT
Place Barth's horrible snapshot of you here.
CONFISCATED
Many unfortunates have been caught trying to get into TV LAND by impersonating Nick at Nite stars. Don't try it! Use your own passport.
Imagine going to TV Land! That magical place where horses talk and cousins are identical. Well now you can! Just fill out this special TV Land passport and ask your travel agent to book you on Nick at Nite's exciting TV LAND CRUISE TO NOWHERE.
Then, while you wait endlessly for your tickets to arrive you can have hours of fun watching TV Land on Nick at Nite. It's the next best thing to being there! (Better in fact. You wouldn't actually want to spend the night in Fernwood, would you?)
Watch Nick at Nite weeknights on cable TV.
"Hello out there from TV Land!"
NICK at NITE
© 1990 MTV Networks


Today and tomorrow, make your own
CONEHEAD!
Wrap head with toilet paper 'til the wee hours. Soon you'll be speaking in mono-syllables, and unwanted emotions will be a thing of the past!
AFTER DINNER
LATE
MIDNIGHT
LATER
WEE HOURS
© 1988 MTV Networks
NICK at NITE
The Saturday Night Live Marathon
Tonight and tomorrow. 8:00 PM to 6:00 AM on Cable TV.

BE DONNA REED
In Less Than Two Hours A Day.
BEFORE
AFTER
Send For Your "Be Donna Reed" Home Study Kit Today!
(BUT DON'T ASK US WHERE)
• Dressing Up For Housework (And the Rest Comes Easy)
• The House Hubby—How to Welcome Him Home if He's Home all Day
• Plus If You Act Now The Garnish Placement Guide
• Meeting Your Appliances Halfway
• The Teen Problem Solver
"Hello out there from TV land!"
NICK at NITE
Watch The Donna Reed Show Weeknights on Cable TV.

Nick at Nite's TV Land Excursions:

MOUNT HITCHCOCK

Your pulse will quicken when you take to the slopes of

"WHERE SKIING CAN BE MURDER"

TV Land's famous Mt. Hitchcock Ski Resort boasts year-round skiing on trails that are not for the faint of heart. ***Dead Man's Curve, Murdered Man's Ridge, Strangled Man's Plunge, Bludgeoned Man's Descent.*** These are slopes that would give a master nightmares. (And for the beginners among you, there's the gentle ***Crazed Lunatic Kiddie Trail!***) If you're a young adult who yearns for chills and suspense you could spend your whole vacation trying to get to Mt. Hitchcock. Or you could just curl up with a cup of hot chocolate and watch ***Alfred Hitchcock Presents*** weeknights on Nick at Nite!

NICK at NITE®

Advertisers, call Harvey Ganot (212)258-8181

"Hello out there from TV land!"™

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Soundtrack producer and guest star: Tom Pomposello

Oldies? Comedy?

The assignment to create network IDs for Nick-at-Nite arose from two different circumstances. The first and best is that the channel that we had created was a roaring success (thank goodness, we'd expended a lot of our reputation on this nutty idea). But, the second was fostered by their ad sales identity crisis.

Color good, black & white bad. Logical on the surface. New good, reruns bad. Got it. Network television (CBS, NBC, ABC) good, cable not so much.

Well, our channel was all B&W, all reruns, all cable. Nonetheless, the media buyers at the ad agencies, while on the surface adhered to the mantra of "just show me the numbers!" turned their back on us.

Comedy? The Nick sales team was hurting.They made their case to the programming and marketing folks at NAN and suggested that we position the channel as "all comedy." Not a bad thought (Comedy Central would be around the corner) but it didn't really work for Nick-at-Nite.

Nonetheless, they persisted. So, the brain trust at Fred/Alan put our heads together. Led by Alan, we had often referenced bits from the Rocky & Bullwinkle show, particularly our favorite.

Bullwinkle: "Hey Rocky, watch me pull a rabbit out of my hat!"

Rocky: "That trick never works."

Alan: "In my view the most brilliant bumpers ever because as a kid you knew there were three endings. You'd wait through the commercials to see which of the three it was this time."

Fred/Alan ID and music producer Tom Pomposello and two of our go-to animation wizards, Eli Noyes and Kit Laybourne, came up with a way to use the Rocky & Bullwinkle model to make hundreds of spots for the normal cost of just a few made with "traditional" animation.

Noyes & Laybourne
Kit Laybourne Eli Noyes
Nick-at-Nite network identifications
Stop Motion Animation 1987-1989

Black & White shows are worthless?

When Nickelodeon convinced Fred/Alan to become a full-service advertising agency (as opposed to being branding and programming consultants), Nick-at-Nite came along in the package.

Ratings were the issue, NAN was consistently the most watched TV block on cable television of the late 1980s.

Advertisers looked at things differently. The oldies/comedy war was in the past, but agencies were still hesitant to try a network that ran "old, black & white shows." After all, everyone ran "reruns" but no one else positioned themselves so boldly.

Clearly, our contemporary, humorous packaging hadn't made a dent in their consciousnesses. Yet.

As part of our company's reinvention to become an agency we figured, why not? Let's hire some people who have actually worked in advertising. The people at Fred/Alan came from a wide ranging set of experiences, but when it came to straight advertising, where our competition were the global giants like J.Walter Thompson and Ogilvy, we were babes in the woods. So, we hired a couple of experienced copywriters and account executives and hoped we could pull it off. MTV and Nickelodeon were two of the hottest commodities in television and here was this scrappy company that had the giant agency accounts.

Noel Frankel was our most experienced copywriter and art director, and boy was he good. And nutty. He'd fit right in. Bill Burnett too.

Our first assignment for Noel was to create commuter train and TV Guide ads. The purpose? Persuade advertisers to use Nick-at-Nite. Excited, Noel dove right in. Boy, did he.

Maybe his work was even too weird for Fred/Alan? No way!

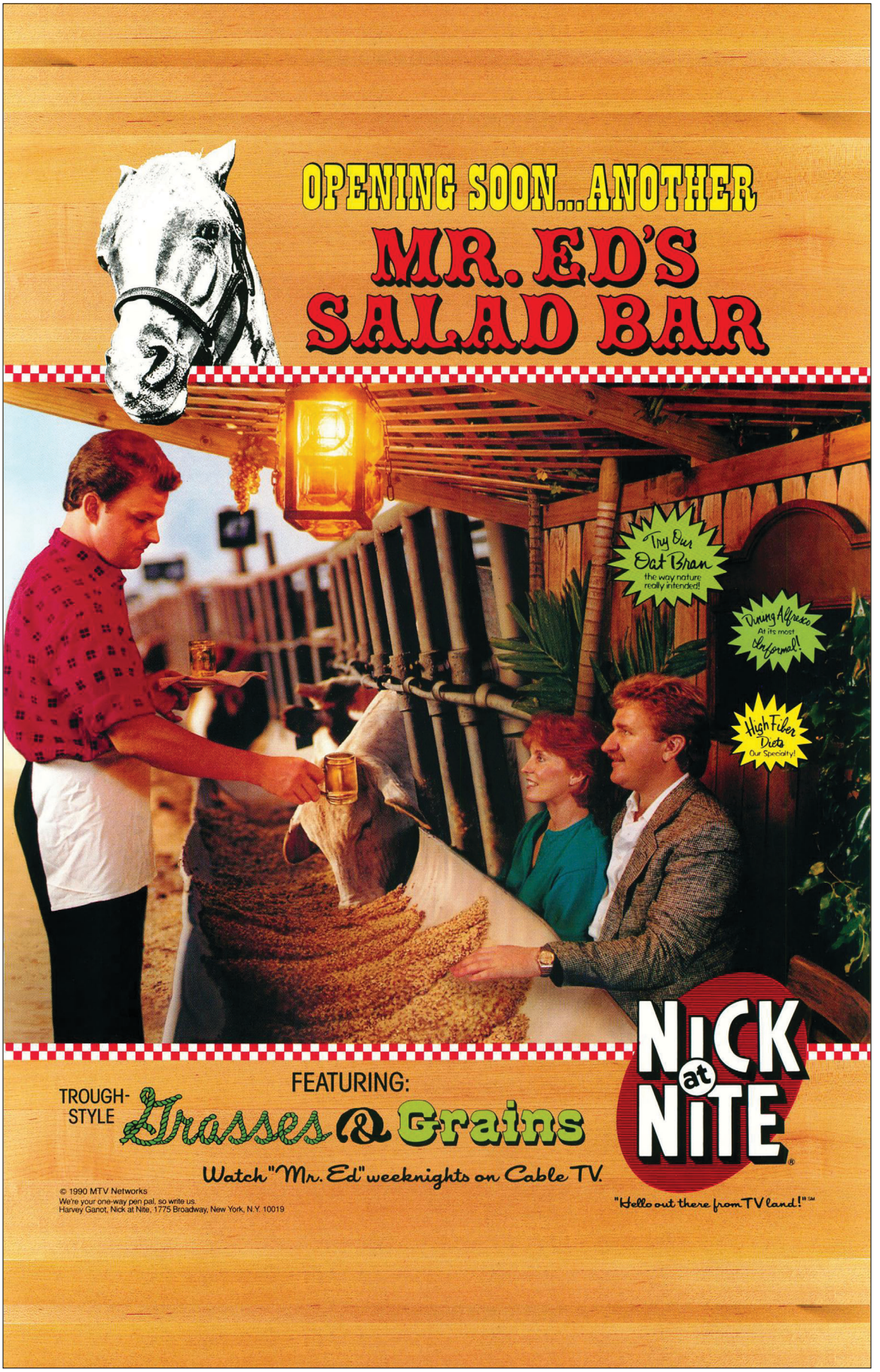
Noel was right on, advertisers started paying attention, and our agency worked on the NAN account until we closed in 1992.

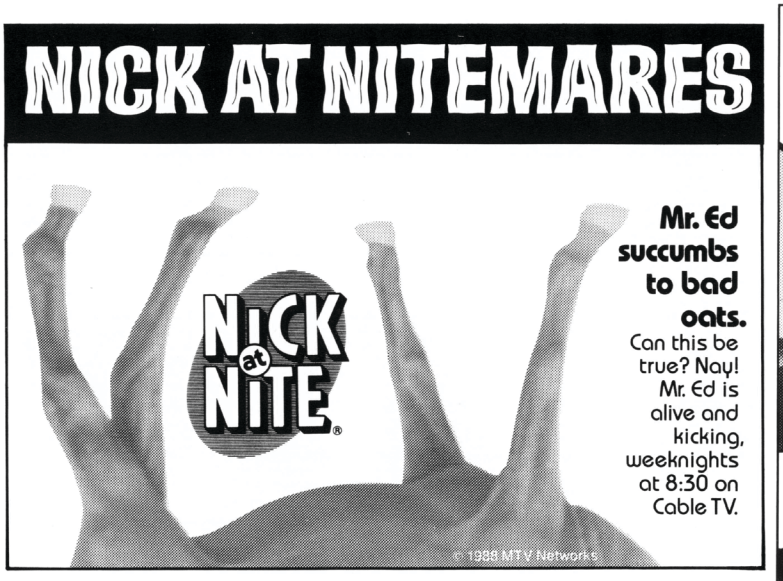
Nick-at-Nite commuter train posters,
TV Guide advertising, and trade advertising
Creative directors/writers:
Noel Frankel and Bill Burnett
Production design & art direction: Bob Zeltmann

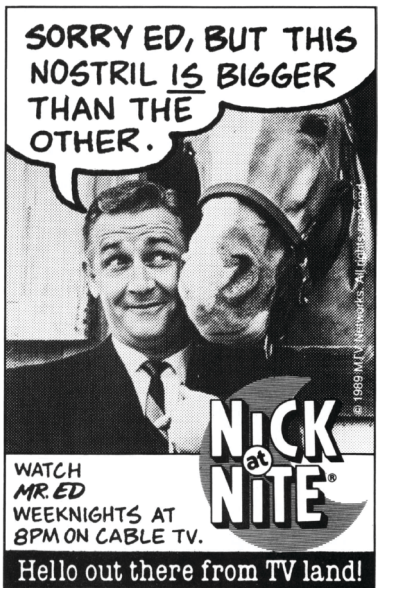
Nick-at-Nite trade advertising (pages 196-7)
copywriters: Steve Diamond, Bill Burnett

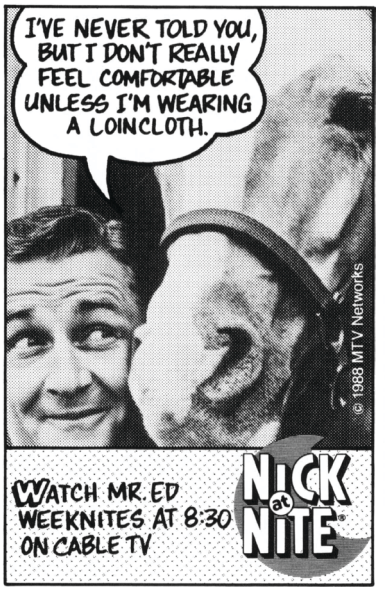
Noel Frankel

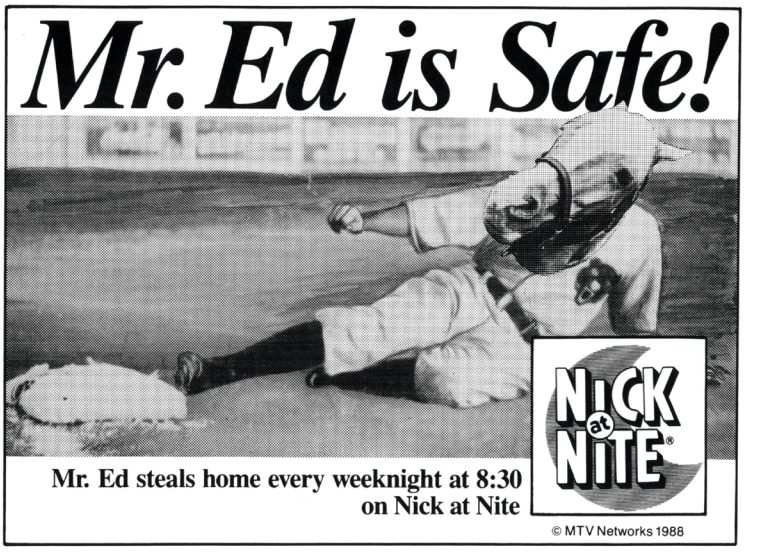
Bill Burnett

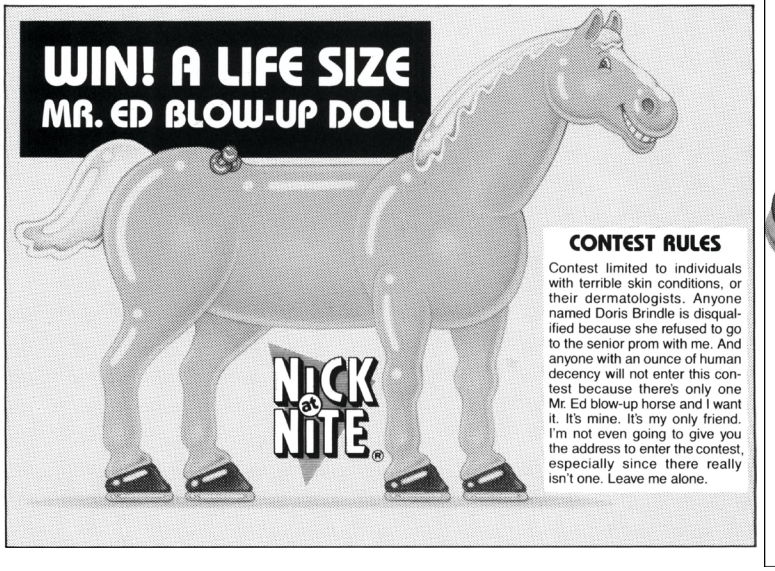

OPENING SOON...ANOTHER
MR. ED'S SALAD BAR
Try Our Oat Bran the way nature really intended!
Dining Alfresco At its most informal!
High Fiber Diets Our Specialty!
FEATURING:
TROUGH-STYLE Grasses & Grains
Watch "Mr. Ed" weeknights on Cable TV.
NICK at NITE
"Hello out there from TV land!"℠
© 1990 MTV Networks
We're your one-way pen pal, so write us.
Harvey Ganot, Nick at Nite, 1775 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10019

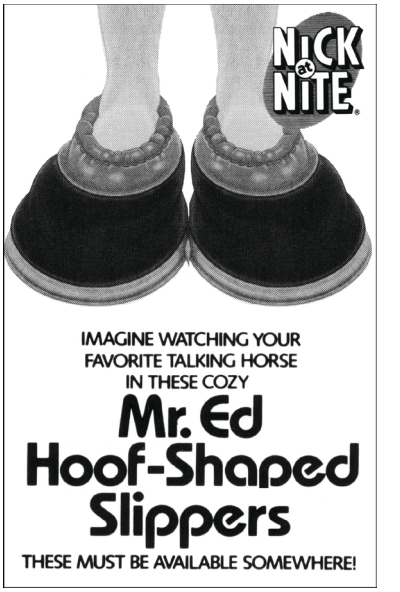

NICK AT NITEMARES
NICK at NITE®
Mr. Ed succumbs to bad oats.
Can this be true? Nay! Mr. Ed is alive and kicking, weeknights at 8:30 on Cable TV.
© 1988 MTV Networks


SORRY ED, BUT THIS NOSTRIL IS BIGGER THAN THE OTHER.
© 1988 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.
WATCH MR. ED WEEKNIGHTS AT 8PM ON CABLE TV.
NICK at NITE®
Hello out there from TV land!


I'VE NEVER TOLD YOU, BUT I DON'T REALLY FEEL COMFORTABLE UNLESS I'M WEARING A LOINCLOTH.
© 1988 MTV Networks
WATCH MR. ED WEEKNITES AT 8:30 ON CABLE TV
NICK at NITE®

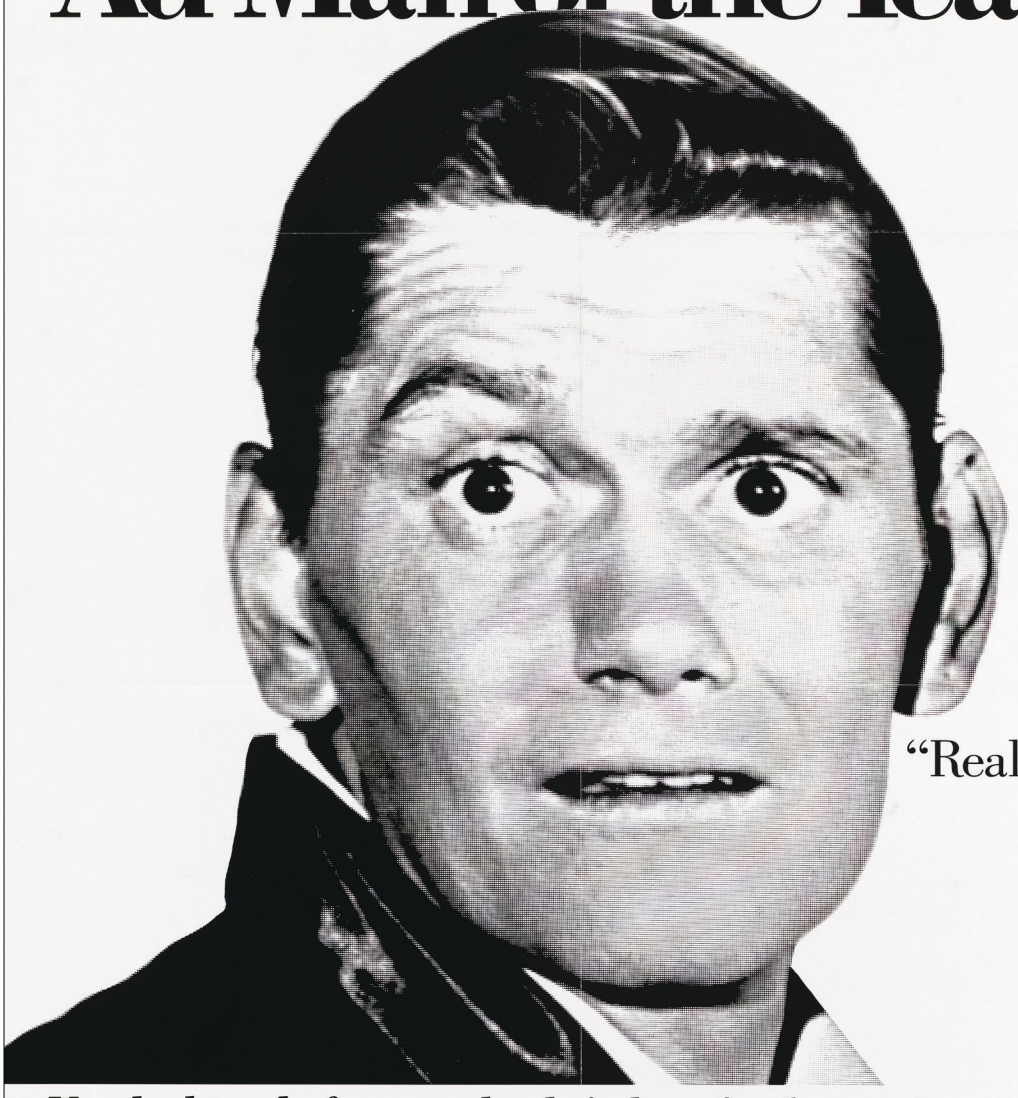

Mr. Ed is Safe!
Mr. Ed steals home every weeknight at 8:30 on Nick at Nite
NICK at NITE®
© MTV Networks 1988


© 1988 MTV Networks
WIN! A LIFE SIZE MR. ED BLOW-UP DOLL
NICK at NITE®
CONTEST RULES
Contest limited to individuals with terrible skin conditions, or their dermatologists. Anyone named Doris Brindle is disqualified because she refused to go to the senior prom with me. And anyone with an ounce of human decency will not enter this contest because there's only one Mr. Ed blow-up horse and I want it. It's mine. It's my only friend. I'm not even going to give you the address to enter the contest, especially since there really isn't one. Leave me alone.


NICK at NITE®
IMAGINE WATCHING YOUR FAVORITE TALKING HORSE IN THESE COZY
Mr. Ed Hoof-Shaped Slippers
THESE MUST BE AVAILABLE SOMEWHERE!

Darrin Stephens—you've just been chosen

Ad Man of the Year!



"Really?"

Now let him do for you what he's done for these advertisers...

Shears Corporate Ponchos
Stephens took a little-known product and rolled it out with the slogan, "Shears Corporate Ponchos–Now You're Really All In It Together!"

The Continent Advertising Council
Of course you recognize them! And you have Darrin Stephens to thank!

NICK at NITE® "Hello out there from TV land!"℠

Nick at Nite®
No, he doesn't do the ads for Nick at Nite, but Nick at Nite sure wishes he did! Maybe then you'd know to watch *Bewitched* weeknights on cable TV.

McMann & Tate Advertising

Advertisers, call Harvey Ganot: (212) 713-7038.

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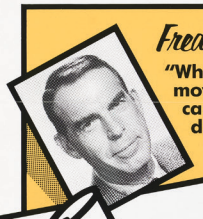
© Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. 1964

COMMUTE-O-MANNERS

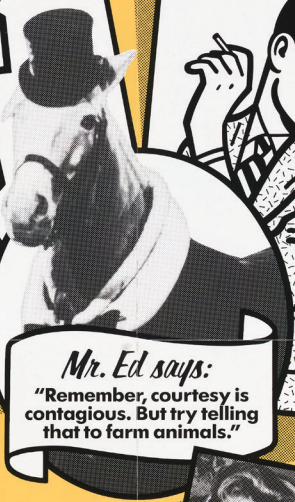
"AFTER YOU!"

"NO, AFTER YOU!"



Fred MacMurray says:
"While train is in motion, move quickly through cars, carrying as many cold drinks as possible."

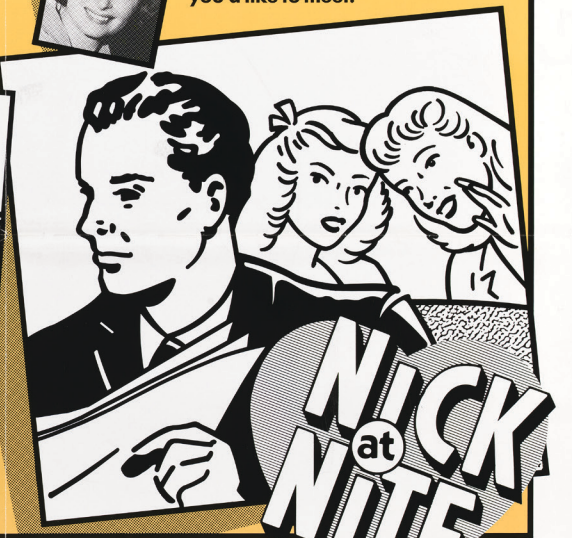
Patty Duke says:
"Overhear all conversations and interject your opinion as often as you can."



Mr. Ed says:
"Remember, courtesy is contagious. But try telling that to farm animals."

Donna Reed says:
"Stare at people you'd like to meet."

Samantha Stephens says:
"If you miss your stop, tell the person sitting next to you ...over and over again."



NICK at NITE®

Watch Nick at Nite on Cable TV.

"Hello out there from TV land!"℠

Advertisers, call Harvey Ganot: (212) 713-7038.

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© Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. 1964

Nick at Nite's COMMUTE-O-MART

"Hello out there from TV land!"

Turn bad news into a great gag...

THE DANNY THOMAS COFFEE SPIT KIT

Be like Danny in "Make Room for Daddy." Appear *caught off guard* by bad news while drinking coffee, and produce a hilarious liquid spray!

Works with news of
- Family Car Dents
- Unexpected Relatives
- Forgotten Anniversaries

$24.95
Supply limited to one per nation.

Watch "Make Room For Daddy," weeknights on Cable TV.

NICK at NITE

© 1988 MTV Networks

The Patty Duke TIME/SPACE TRAVEL INSTITUTE

Exist concurrently on two planes of reality. Have twice as many friends! Attend two parties at one time! Wear the red tie *and* the green tie! Be two places everyday, the easy time/space travel way.

(Or fast!) — BE TWO PLACES AT THE SAME TIME!!!

Watch "The Patty Duke Show" starring Patty Duke, weeknights on Cable TV.

NICK at NITE

© 1988 MTV Networks

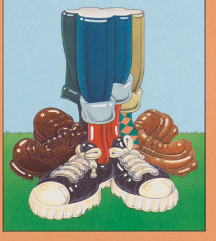
You Can Own This Beautiful "My Three Sons" Legs Lawn Sculpture

Let the whole neighborhood know you're a TV comedy fan with this handsome objet d'art. Battery-operated foot goes up and down in time to My Three Sons theme song, which plays constantly. Each sculpture handcrafted from genuine pieces of discarded mannequins and glazed to perfection! Not available anywhere, even from us.

NICK at NITE

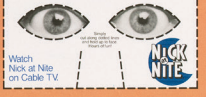
"MY THREE SONS"
Weeknights on Cable TV.

© 1988 MTV Networks



Enjoy Nick at Nite all the more with this

OFFICIAL NICK AT NITE VIEWING MASK



Watch Nick at Nite on Cable TV.

NICK at NITE

NICK AT NITEMARES

Toody and Muldoon eaten by giant lizard.

Gasp! Say it isn't so! Say it ain't so! The days of Jim Backus provoking mighty belly laughs seven nights a week on Cable TV.

NICK at NITE

© 1988 MTV Networks

FOR THE AROMA OF DONNA REED'S HOMEMADE APPLE PIE

SCRATCH 'N' SNIFF

(Note: For best results have real apple pie nearby.)

NICK at NITE

Watch Donna Reed Weeknights On Cable TV

© 1988 MTV Networks

Own your own

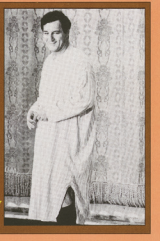
Danny Thomas shower curtain!

Hand embroidered and "jeweled" in the Mesopotamian region, this handsome curtain weighing over 1700 lbs. turns any shower stall into a stage! Drip dries in months. Waterproof sheet music included: $2,500.

(Not available anywhere, even at this price.)

Watch "Make Room For Daddy," weeknights on Cable TV.

NICK at NITE



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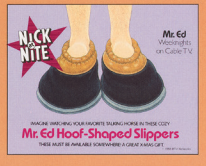


IMAGINE WATCHING YOUR FAVORITE TALKING HORSE IN THESE COZY

Mr. Ed Hoof-Shaped Slippers

THESE MUST BE AVAILABLE SOMEWHERE! A GREAT X-MAS GIFT

Turns any household pet into a killer bee!

Killer Bee Kit!

$14.95

"Hello out there from TV land!"

The Best of Saturday Night Live. Weeknights on Cable TV.

With the original cast

THE DONNA REED LOOK UN-ALIKE CONTEST

WINNER!
RAUL DELGATO
BROOKLYN, N.Y.

Watch "The Donna Reed Show" weeknights on Cable TV.

NICK at NITE

THE MR. ED LOOK UN-ALIKE CONTEST

WINNER!
TOMMY THE LOBSTER
KENNEBUNKPORT, ME.

Watch "Mr. Ed" weeknights on Cable TV.

NICK at NITE

WIN! A LIFE SIZE MR. ED BLOW-UP DOLL

NICK at NITE

Watch Mr. Ed weeknights on Cable TV.

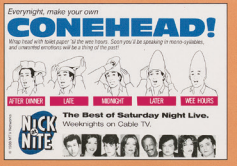
CONTEST RULES

Contest limited to individuals with terrible skin conditions, or their dermatologists. Anyone named Doris Brindle is disqualified because she refused to go to the senior prom with me. And anyone with an ounce of human decency will not enter this contest because there's only one Mr. Ed blow-up horse and I want it. It's mine. It's my only friend. I'm not even going to give you the address to enter the contest, especially since there really isn't one. Leave me alone.

© 1988 MTV Networks

Everynight, make your own

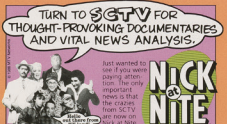
CONEHEAD!



The Best of Saturday Night Live. Weeknights on Cable TV.

NICK at NITE

TURN TO SCTV FOR THOUGHT-PROVOKING DOCUMENTARIES AND VITAL NEWS ANALYSIS.



Just wanted to see if you were paying attention. The only important news is that the stars from SCTV are now on Nick at Nite.

NICK at NITE

SCTV

Nightly, on Cable TV
Starring people who were nobodies when they made these shows, but are all stars now.

NICK at NITE®

Advertisers, call Harvey Ganot: (212) 713-7038

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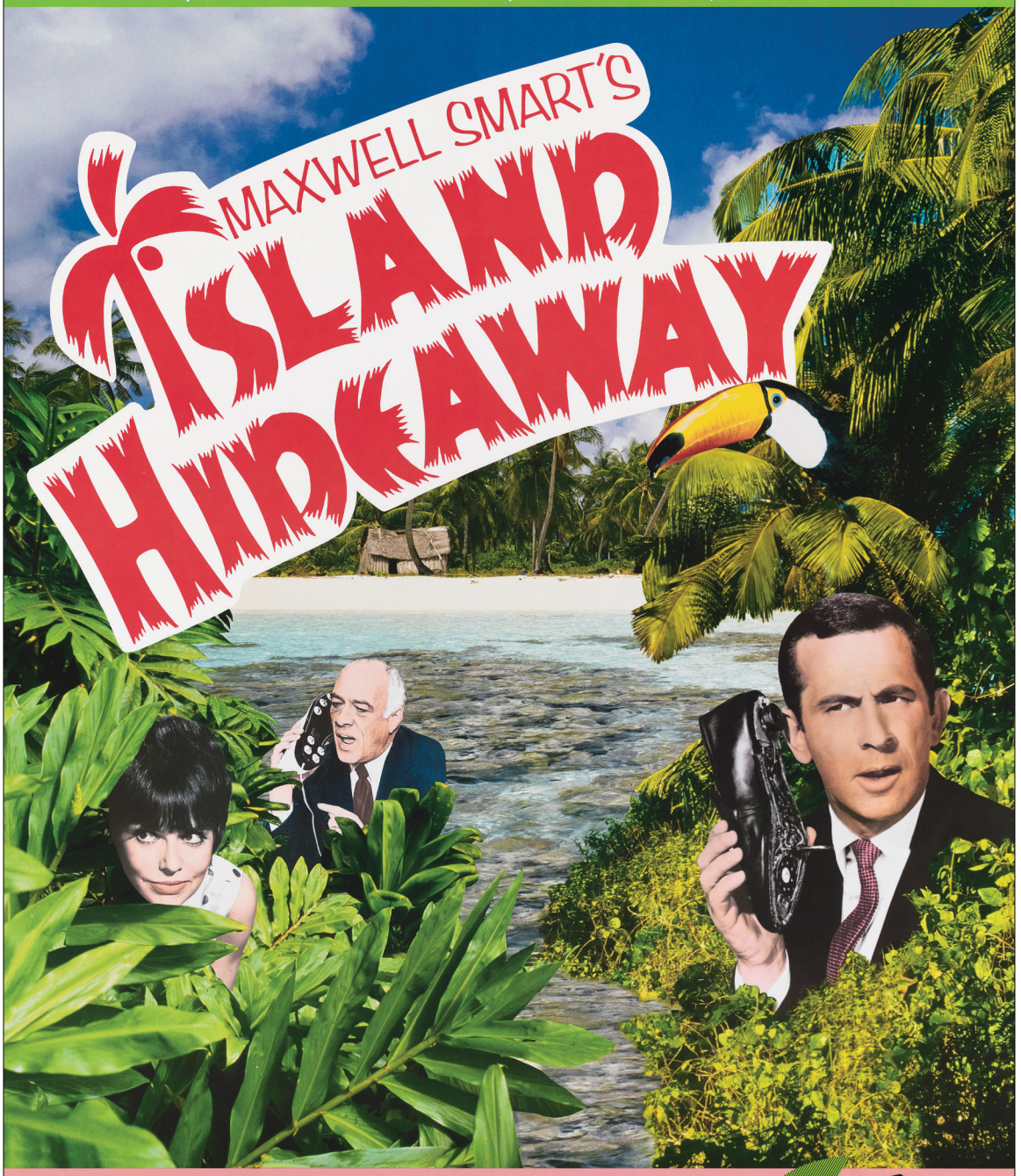
Nick at Nite's TV Land Excursions:

Even you won't know where you are when you escape to



Maxwell Smart's Island Hideaway is TV Land's great escape for all of you out there who know you're being followed by malevolent pharmacists. (Or perhaps by evil members of your high school reunion committee.) Come to the island and crouch in the bushes, or climb under a rock and hide for weeks at a time. No one will be able to find you. This place is so secret we haven't the slightest idea where it is. (As soon as we find out we'll let you know.) Meanwhile, smart young adults are locking their doors, unplugging their phones and watching *Get Smart* weeknights on Nick at Nite.

NICK at NITE

"Hello out there from TV land!"™

Advertisers, call Harvey Ganot (212)258-8181

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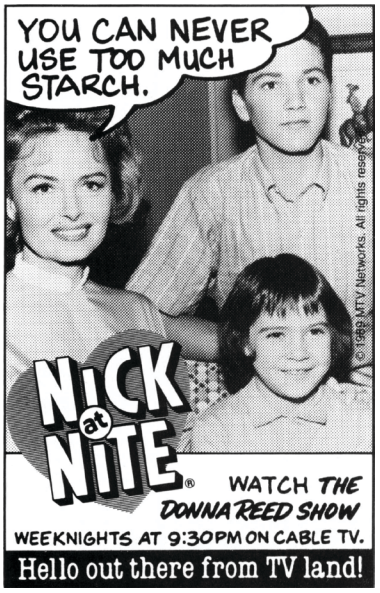
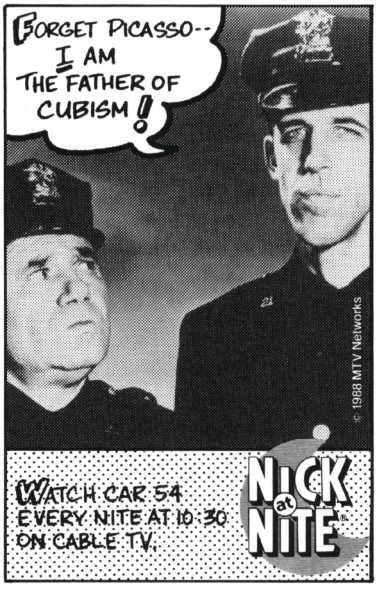
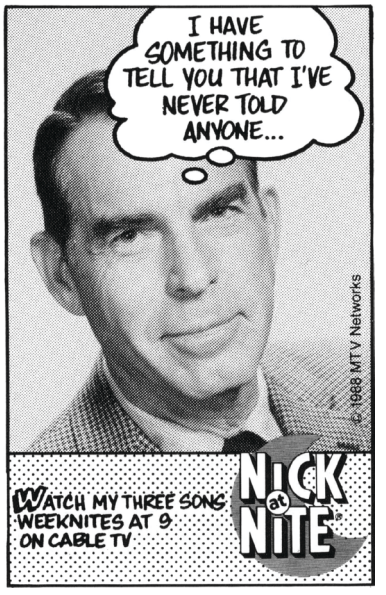
Nick at Nite's TV Land Excursions:
Official
TV LAND PASSPORT™
CONFISCATED
NICK at NITE
EXIT
EXIT
Nick at Nite's TV Land Excursions:
MOUNT HITCHCOCK
WHERE SKIING CAN BE MURDER™
NICK at NITE


YOU CAN NEVER USE TOO MUCH STARCH.
© 1989 MTV Networks. All rights reserved.
NICK at NITE®
WATCH THE DONNA REED SHOW
WEEKNIGHTS AT 9:30PM ON CABLE TV.
Hello out there from TV land!


FORGET PICASSO-- I AM THE FATHER OF CUBISM!
© 1988 MTV Networks
WATCH CAR 54 EVERY NITE AT 10:30 ON CABLE TV.
NICK at NITE®


I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU THAT I'VE NEVER TOLD ANYONE...
© 1988 MTV Networks
WATCH MY THREE SONS WEEKNITES AT 9 ON CABLE TV
NICK at NITE®

Listen To Me!

by Raul DelGato

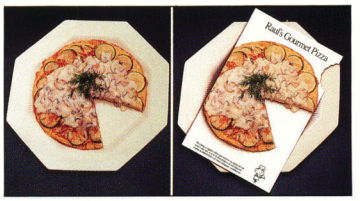
Edible Advertising

Listen to me! I've done it again! I've just come up with the next mega-gimmick for print advertising. **Brand Managers**–you've done it all and seen it all, right? I mean, after Scratch 'n Sniff ads, perfumed ads, pop-up ads, ads that play tunes–where do you go next?

Edible ads, that's where!

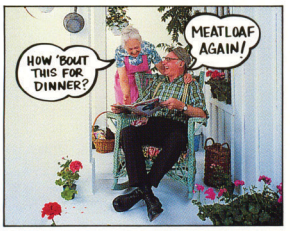
Call it Tear 'n Taste advertising. Or Read 'n Feed. Or Peruse 'n Chew. Heck, it's not the name that's important, it's the *idea.*

Listen to me!



Alphabet soup is kid's stuff compared to edible verbs!

Picture some poor member of a demographic target group stuck on a subway, or on a plane waiting for take-off. Bored, depressed, hungry, he's thumbing through some periodical when suddenly he finds *an ad he can eat!* **Maybe it's for fried chicken or frozen pizza.** Maybe it's an ad for an oil filter, but it tastes like a hot fudge sundae. Whatever…I guarantee that our target group member has just fallen in love with the advertiser who placed that ad.



"Pass-alongs" packed with flavor.

Shouldn't that advertiser be you?

I tell you it's just a matter of time before people who normally head for the vending machines at snacktime will be pawing through magazines instead, **searching for your edible advertisement.** And when they find it, they're sure to read before they feed. You never eat anything without looking at it first, right?

What better way is there for people to completely absorb your message?!!

You could even get an antacid company to insert a couple of Pop 'n Drop tablets a few pages down to help folks digest your big idea. Water–of course, water! Bottled water advertisers, here's your chance. Insert a packet of the stuff to help wash down that antacid. (I once drank a Christmas vodka ad, thinking I'd get a taste, but it was only some strange tasting fluid with phony snow–**a total waste of a water-proof page!**)

Of course, none of this will work if you're running ads on TV. Your best bet there is still Nick at Nite, where viewers with a hunger for comedy find a unique brand of lunacy that sticks to their ribs *and* their funnybones.

But the rest of the huddled masses out there are yearning for some truly tasteful print advertising. If you listen closely you can hear their stomachs growling right now. *You* could be the one to satisfy that hunger, if you have the smarts to listen to me!

LAST MINUTE COPY

Nick at Nite Delivers Upscale Audience!

Nick at Nite indexes above average U.S. TVHHs for Income and County size, according to Nielsen Special MSA Analysis (8p–2a), October 1988.

NICK at NITE®

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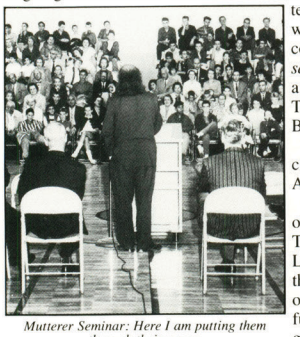
Listen To Me!

by Raul DelGato

Mutter Media

OKAY, OKAY! HERE IT IS! I'M SERIOUS! *THIS IS IT!* THIS ONE IS REALLY GOOD! I'VE GOT THE MEGA MEDIA IDEA OF THE YEAR! OF THE CENTURY!

I was waiting for a bus a few weeks ago and, just by chance, I was struck with nothing less than THE FUTURE OF ADVERTISING MEDIA. I was only partially paying attention to the well-dressed man standing next to me as he muttered to himself. Over and over, he repeated just these words: "We should have stayed in the *motel* instead of going to *her house.* We should have stayed in the *motel* instead of going to *her house*…" It was of no consequence. **BUT,** when I got home, it **hit** me. There I was, hanging up my coat, when I inexplicably said to myself, "We should have stayed in the motel instead of going to her house." EUREKA! *I began to think:* What if I can get a team of mutterers to say what I want them to say? What if they could deliver *advertising messages* instead of meaningless angst? IF I COULD TAP THIS MEDIUM WE'D ALL BE RICH!



Mutterer Seminar: Here I am putting them through their paces.

Well, the future is here. It's called MUTTER MEDIA. And it works–I've tried it!

I come from a large family of excellent public mutterers. They helped me test my idea. Last week, I sent them out into the streets, into the stores, and onto public transportation, fully armed with catchy ad slogans. GUESS WHAT? What was once empty verbiage suddenly drove sales like gangbusters!

The next step, of course, is to take this national. Imagine the **reach,** the **frequency,** the **impact!** You'd go to the supermarket, and there, wandering the aisles, would be one of my media mutterers spouting a paid announcement: STUFFING, INSTEAD OF POTATOES! STUFFING, INSTEAD OF POTATOES! (The ultimate in P.O.P. advertising!) You'd be walking down the street and a mutterer would implore: HOW DO *YOU* SPELL RELIEF?!? In the mall, at the park: NEW RANCH FLAVOR! LOOK, A WHITE TORNADO! THE QUICKER PICKER UPPER! Who could ask for anything more?

Mutterers: Filling America's breadbasket

Since accountability is all-important, we will make use of a new device that I have designed: the MUTTER MEDIA METER. It will count the number of times a particular MUTTER MESSAGE is delivered in a given time period, yielding a GMM figure (Gross Muttered Messages). Plus, the mutterers will keep diaries so that we can compute audience composition. ("I muttered to 37 men and 56 women today. Only 2 called the police.")

Now, the unit rate will be really high. But that's because **nobody will have anything to compete with MUTTER MEDIA.** Nobody except Nick at Nite, that is. Yes, I've got to admit it. Nick at Nite is a formidable presence among advertising vehicles. A force to contend with. But aside from the classic environment of Nick at Nite, only MUTTER MEDIA will deliver an advertising message as effectively, as efficiently, and with as much spittle.

LAST MINUTE COPY

Nick at Nite Has Top Concentrations of Women!

Nick at Nite has higher concentrations of women viewers 18–49 and 25–54 than any Network programming genre, says the first quarter 1989 Nielsen People-Meter report as well as the February 1989 NAD report.*

*Base: Women 18+, 8P–11P

NICK at NITE®

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Listen To Me!

by Raul DelGato

Monumental Licensing

Listen to me! Will you just shut up and listen to me for one minute? I **know** what the problem is. The problem is focus groups.

Our country is being run by the Orzo quintuplets. Right now, everything in our lives, from what the President thinks about nuclear waste disposal to whether a certain dog food should be described as "Meaty-licious," is being decided by these look-alikes in Atlanta, sitting in front of a one-way mirror, eating roast beef sandwiches. I **know.** I've seen them. I've even conducted **counter** focus groups, where **I** observe the research people who are observing these identical women, and I've got news for you–they're **all** eating roast beef sandwiches, on **both** sides of the mirror. **That's why this country is in such a mess!**

THE ORZO QUINTUPLETS

What we ought to be doing is this: We ought to take all that money that the big corporations are pouring into focus group research and give it to **one really smart guy.** Me.

I'm tellin' you I've got a bold vision, big ideas. "Prove it," you say? All right, listen to me: We've got a big deficit, right? A trillion dollar national debt? How's this for a solution– we license our great natural scenic wonders to big corporations and let them **change their names.** I call this idea MONUMENTAL LICENSING.

FOCUS GROUP AU JUS

For instance, the Rocky Mountains could become THE STOVE TOP STUFFING MOUNTAINS–for a fee, of course . . . say 3 billion a year. It would be worth it for that kind of advertising. "Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain . . . If you look out the right side of the cabin you'll see that we are passing over the Stove Top Stuffing Mountains . . ." Now **that's** brand recognition.

The Grand Canyon could become FAB CANYON.

Lake Tahoe might be changed to LAKE ALPO.

And the Mississippi River could become the mighty MAALOX RIVER (until Cairo, where it's joined by the Ohio and becomes the MAALOX PLUS RIVER–you see, I've got this all worked out).

In just the few I've named we must be up to 10 or 20 billion in new revenues for the country, new media opportunities for advertisers.

But will anybody listen to me? Probably not. You're probably laughing at me right now, just as your kind has laughed at **all** the great visionaries throughout history–Busby Berkeley, Leo Durocher, Sam Sneed. Well, go ahead, enjoy your fleeting moments of gaiety. You'll be hearing from me regularly now, because I've got this column. And who pays for this unadulterated brilliance? No, it's not your tax dollars. It's the monumental minds at Nick at Nite, those marketers smart enough to listen to me!

LAST MINUTE COPY

Nick at Nite Grows at Incredible Rate.

From 4th quarter 1987 to 4th quarter 1988, Nick at Nite's household rating has increased 100% (Source: Nielsen People Meter, 4th Quarter 1987, 1988). In addition, new subscribers have been added, resulting in a 23% increase over the past year.

No one knows who Raul DelGato is or what he does for a living.

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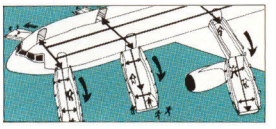
Listen To Me!

by Raul DelGato

Raul's Recap

HOW COME NO ONE IS LISTENING TO ME!?!

Here, on these pages, I've put forth some of the most revolutionary ideas in **advertising history.** And yet, YOU PEOPLE AREN'T LISTENING! Believe me, I've looked around. And to my extreme sadness I've not seen anyone taking full advantage of my media magnanimity. Yet, it's truly inconceivable that the fault lies with the concepts. THEY'RE INGENIOUS. So it must be that you didn't read them.



Captive Solicitation: the only thing between you and success is an emergency water landing.

Well, for those of you who weren't paying attention, I'm going to save your career right here and now. I'm going to let you have another look at my important advertising media innovations, so PAY ATTENTION and LISTEN TO ME! Here they are:

MONUMENTAL LICENSING: A mega-idea of the first order. License great natural scenic wonders to advertisers. Imagine the brand visibility when coast-to-coast travelers see the "Stove Top Stuffing Mountains," or "Lake Alpo" from 30,000 feet!

Scattershot Targeting at its most effective.

DIRECT INDUCEMENT: Why bother with all the hassles of creating and placing advertising? Just get a bunch of addresses, put some money in envelopes, and send them out with a note that says, "Hey you, here's some money, why don't you go buy some of my stuff!"

CAPTIVE SOLICITATION: A brilliant, perfectly conceived selling method: The perfect environment for any presentation is one in which your prospect has absolutely no chance of escape! It works best on elevators, airplanes and trains. Try it on your next commute.

SCATTERSHOT TARGETING: An important idea whose time has come. Why waste effort crunching numbers and cross-tabulating? **Just send stuff out!**

EDIBLE ADVERTISING: After scratch 'n sniff ads, perfumed ads, pop-up ads and ads that play tunes, where do you go next? *Edible ads,* that's where! What better way for people to *completely absorb* your message?

Edible Advertising: alphabet soup is kid's stuff compared to edible verbs!

MUTTER MEDIA: The most completely ingenious idea of the decade. Get a nationwide team of public mutterers to deliver your advertising messages P.O.P.! No other ad vehicle can provide as much impact or as much spittle!

VISITING VIEWERSHIP: Take advantage of that expensive agency square-footage and double-bill your clients: Once for creating an ad, and again for running the masses through your office to see it. It's the best media vehicle because it isn't even a vehicle–it's hall space!

Mutterer Seminar: Here I am putting them through their paces.

These ideas are *good!* WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU!?! Why is it that I'm the only one smart enough to recognize my own **brilliance?**

Okay, sure, we all get a little busy now and then. I know, sometimes we don't even have time to read all the things we should be reading–even crucial items like this column! But don't fret, I'll help you out; you can easily get reprints of all my past columns (containing the full business-improving details of all my great ideas)!

Just send a business card or note to me, RAUL DELGATO, %Nick at Nite Marketing, 1775 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10019. Believe me, you'll be glad you finally LISTENED TO ME!

LAST MINUTE COPY

Parents and Kids Watch Nick at Nite Together!

Nick at Nite reaches both parents and kids with its family-oriented, wide-appeal programming. Nick at Nite inherits a large audience of kids from Nickelodeon, who are later joined by a steadily increasing adult viewing audience. The result is a Prime Time audience with a healthy mix of parents and their kids.

(Source: Nielsen People Meter, 1st Quarter 1989.)

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Fred/Alan's innovation with Nick-at-Nite had already defied all odds by running just "reruns" and becoming one of the top rated cable networks. Better yet the channel was "branded," which meant that advertisers would pay more for their commercials. But there were only so many ways to re-package and re-present old shows, and we'd pretty much used them all.

"What next?" was the theme of the out-of-office meeting at New York's Royalton Hotel that Nickelodeon President Gerry Laybourne called with her staff. Alan and Fred were invited as special guests.

We tossed around a lot of stuff, mainly variations of what we were already doing. But more marathons ("See all the black & white "Bewitched" episodes in order!") or stunts ("The Nick-at-Nite String-a-thon!") weren't going to cut it; NAN was already the best in the business at that. Nick-at-Nite needed to do something bigger!

We'd always loved "The Dick Van Dyke Show," and we were about to bring back one of the great classics back to TV for the first time in a long while. It was funny (and who didn't have a crush on the young Mary Tyler Moore).

For a long while, we felt like a unique cable channel could use a star spokesperson. We'd accomplished a lot with packaging and promotion. Now, Fred had a bright idea. Why doesn't the channel actually hire Dick Van Dyke –who's classic early 1960s situation comedy was a giant hit on the network– as the "Chairman of Nick-at-Nite?" He certainly looked the part, with an executive mane of gray hair and an authoritative mustache.

Fred/Alan staff at the Dick Van Dyke press introduction
Left to right: Robert Hunter, Alan Goodman, Bill Burnett, Nick-at-Nite Chairman Dick Van Dyke, Fred Seibert, Bill Horvath, Tom Barreca, Dave Landesberg, Lou Baur

Programming head Herb Scannell (soon to be CEO) upped the ante. He did a little back-of-a-napkin math and realized the idea could be even bigger. “We’ll announce it as a million dollar deal.” Back in the day, there were no big deals being done with name talent, just little hosting gigs here and there. "Salary, promotion, and programming production commitments... we can swing it.“

Sure enough, the announcement made headlines across the business, and then further, in the general interest newspapers across the country. Nick-at-Nite (and cable) was starting to come into its own.

As things turned out, the naming of the Chairman turned out to be our last Nick-at-Nite project before Fred/Alan called it day.

Summer 1992:
Fred/Alan names Dick Van Dyke as the Chairman of Nick-at-Nite

Alan: **Ushering in a new era** of television meant more than just coming up with a new vocabulary, audacious ways of editing, and a re-focus on sound as an important element of communication. We weren't just adding. We were replacing the old ways.

Our early interactions with CBS were a perfect example of what an imperfect marriage that was turning out to be.

In the early 1980s, the legacy TV hierarchy had no idea how to deal with a changing audience. For the most part, homes still had just one TV set in the house. The premium channels brought movies and late night nudity into the living room, but basic cable hadn't yet become a creator and distributor of significant original content. Most U.S. TV viewers chose from a maximum of three networks — ABC, CBS, and NBC — when they gathered around the set at night.

So in an attempt to keep younger viewers in the fold, the Big Three tried (ineptly) to incorporate elements they thought were the essence of youth culture into their existing series and formats. The results were things like putting MTV VJ Nina Blackwood on "Circus of the Stars," or dressing up stars in spangly Vegas-style outfits to bash their way through music chart-toppers.

An early advocate of ours was a guy named Fred Rappaport, at the time the Vice President of Specials for CBS. Whether he actually knew what we did for a living, or just knew we were "the MTV guys," Fred offered again and again to shoehorn us into projects he thought might benefit from the "new thing," whatever that was.

He hoped we could enliven a special called "How To Be A Man" by the creators of the TV classic "Free to Be You And Me." It had already become a cluster hump when the network forced Bob Keeshan — TV's "Captain Kangaroo" — into the show as host and co-producer. There isn't much evidence anywhere that special existed, and that's probably a good thing. We couldn't, and didn't, do much of anything on it.

We were more involved with "The Johnny Cash 10th Anniversary Christmas Special." And that brought us into contact with Joe Cates.

Joe and his brother Gil were legendary New York-based producers and directors, with decades behind them. In 1949, Joe was an associate producer of the Dumont network program "Cavalcade of Stars" and introduced Art Carney — then a sidekick of Morey Amsterdam's —

THE 10th ANNIVERSARY

JOHNNY CASH

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

December 10, 1985

to Jackie Gleason. He also designed the set for "The Honeymooners," and alone or with his brother, produced more than 1000 television specials. That list included all of the Johnny Cash specials, as well as the TV movies he made with Cash, Kris Kristofferson, Willie Nelson, and other country stars.

So this was it. We were in the big time. And boy, what a let down.

Our assignment was to create some music video-style montages from the previous nine specials, and a snappy opening. I worked out what the budget would be, using a lot of our favorite MTV and Nickelodeon animators, and brought

that to Cates. "You can have half," he told me. I started sputtering. I was using independents who slashed their prices already to get into the game, I told him. These were trusted suppliers. "You don't understand," I said. "No, you don't understand," he said. "You're not going to get me one viewer. By the time anyone sees your first frame of animation, they'll be there already. The only value you bring is, if someone at the building [CBS] pops in the tape, maybe I'll get another special out of it."

I was speechless. He was absolutely right. It was the first of many lessons I learned from him, some intentional, some not-so-intentional. TV is about viewers. Nothing else. I don't think three months have gone by since that meeting in 1985 when I haven't told that story.

Later, I learned how haphazardly TV was made in an era when most viewers still had limited choices and were content, if not thrilled, to watch whatever was on. On the day the performances were to be shot at Opryland, I flew to Nashville and ran into Cates in the hotel lobby as I was checking in. (I would make trips that day to the Country Music Hall of Fame and Cash's private museum and archive to gather materials for the montage sequences). He greeted me and I asked him how things were going, imagining that with the stage heating up and the taping just hours away, that the Opryland stage must be buzzing with excitement. "I don't know. I haven't been there yet. I've been too busy scouting locations for my next movie," he told me. I wondered if I would ever grow comfortable enough as a producer to leave something entirely in someone else's hands (eventually, I did), and couldn't grasp how he could be so nonchalant.

After my scavenger hunt for Cash material we could animate, I drove to the theater in the afternoon in time to see Cash throw out the script and sit down to write jokes himself. "It's funnier than the crap you guys are turning out," he said to the writers. Keep in mind it's 2:00 pm and cameras were to roll, with a live audience in attendance, in about five hours.

That evening, I was tucked into the control room alongside Rappaport, our backs to the wall as we watched brother Gil directing a sequence. One feature the show promised was a tribute to the legendary Million Dollar Quartet, which began and ended in 1956 as a jam session at Sun Records in Memphis with Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, and Elvis Presley. Presley was obviously unavailable on account of being dead, and Carl Perkins wasn't interested. Jerry Lee showed up, and the reunion didn't soften decades of animosity between the men. He didn't say one word to Cash at rehearsal or at any time during the taping. To fill out the roster on what was essentially a family special (all the Cash and Carter Cash relatives performed), Johnny turned to his 15-year-old son John Carter Cash. He has had his own career in music, but at the time he was the runt of the litter. And there he was alongside his father and Jerry Lee, with legendary Nashville studio guys banging out a barely tolerable version of "Johnny B. Goode."

As the music played and Gil tried his best to call the camera cuts (he wasn't really a music editor), Rappaport

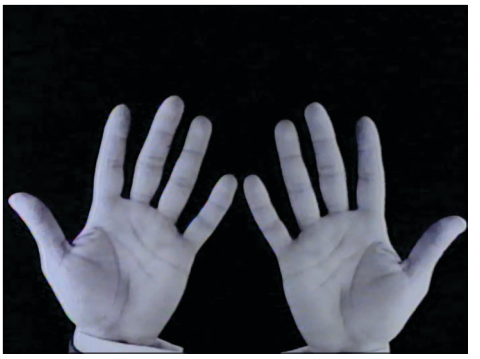
leaned over and whispered to me, "This is like a bad Bar Mitzvah." I almost lost it.

A little later, with cameras still rolling, Joe grabbed me by the arm to walk down the hall with him and get a cup of coffee. "You know, years ago when I was with NBC producing spectaculars — we called them 'spectaculars' in those days, not specials..." I was again, non-plussed. What the hell was going on? We were in the middle of taping an expensive holiday special for a major network and this guy wanted to reminisce?

In the end, our friend Joey Ahlbum merged every filmed version of "I Walk the Line" I could get my hands on, as well as newspaper articles and photos that had never been widely circulated, into a lovely animated sequence that possessed none of the charm and personality Joey was known for. I did some montages of guest performances from previous specials that I made in the editing studio with John Tierney, a brilliant editor who saved countless sessions with us inexperienced producers through his ingenuity and talent.

What was the result? Joe did not get another special out of it. The show did nothing to bring MTV's brashness and exuberance to network television. And I got some indelible lessons on why this era was ending, and ours was beginning. The days when three networks could cram anything down your throat was coming to an end. An era where targeting, specialization, and unlimited choices that would inspire better quality was on its way in.

...
10th Anniversary Johnny Cash Christmas Special (CBS Television Network)
Creative director: Alan Goodman
Animation producer: Tom Pomposello
Associate producer: Tina Potter
Illustration & animation: Joey Ahlbum
Client: Joseph Cates



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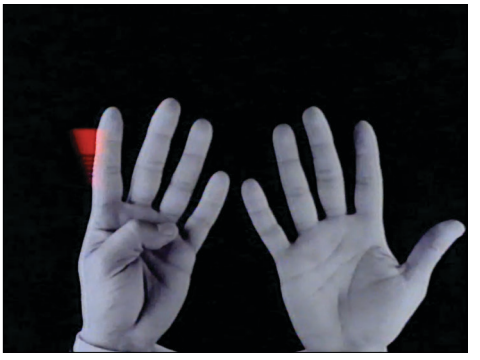

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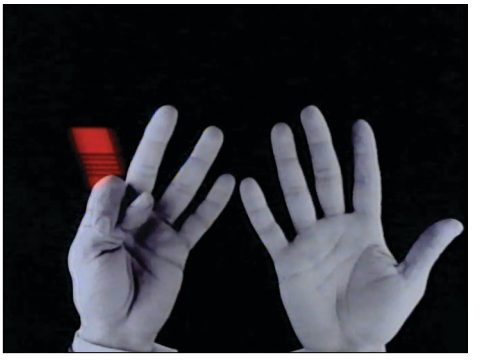

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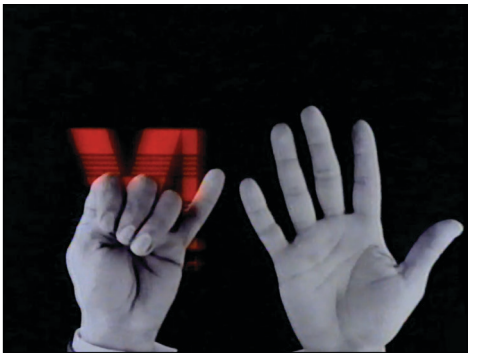


VH1

Fred/Alan had several engagements with VH1 over several years. We started with the all-hands-on-deck speedy launch in 1985 as a "fighting brand" in response to Turner Broadcasting's Cable Music Channel that was meant to challenge MTV: Music Television. We then became their advertising agency in 1988. And finally, in 1991 we were asked to completely rethink the programming of the entire network because of their continued paltry ratings based on their original strategies. (We suggested –and they agreed –to an approach that had worked for decades in radio: "The Greatest Hits of Music Video!)

VH1

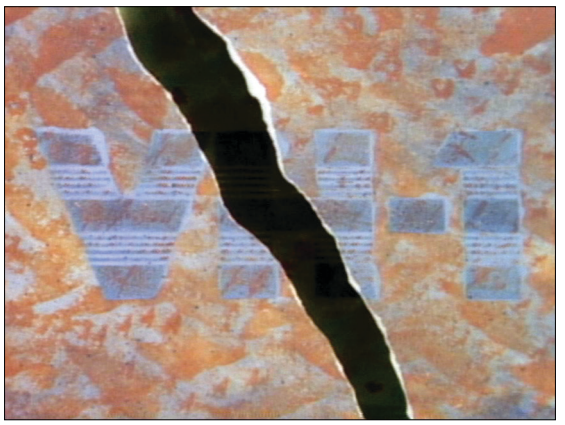
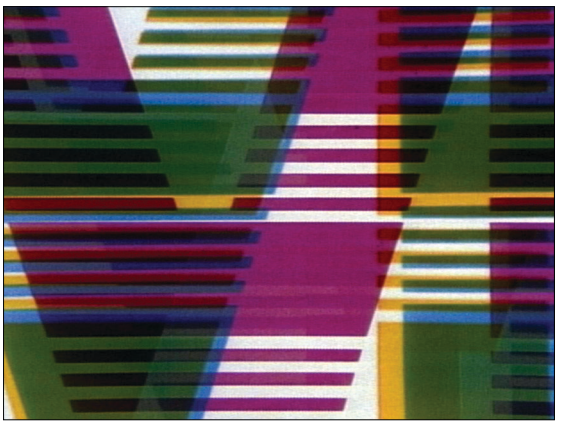
1986-1992

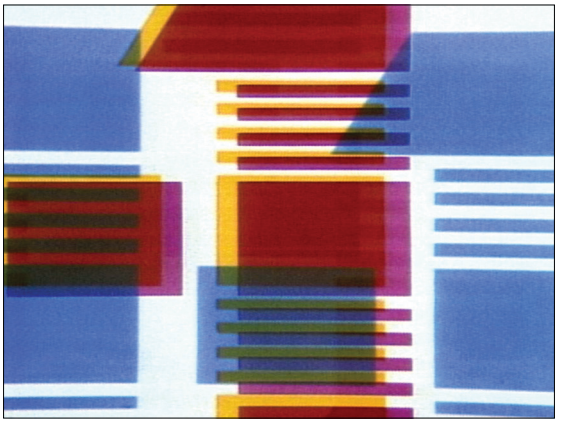
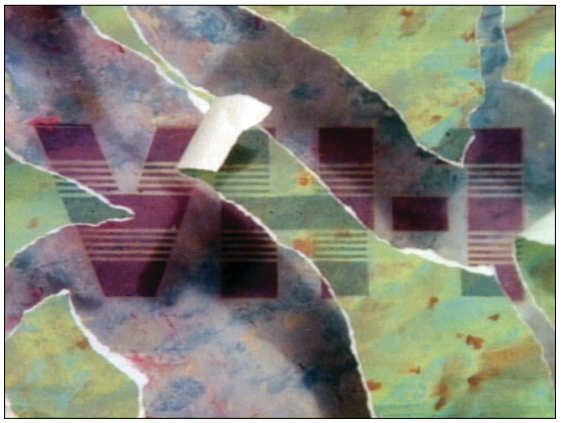
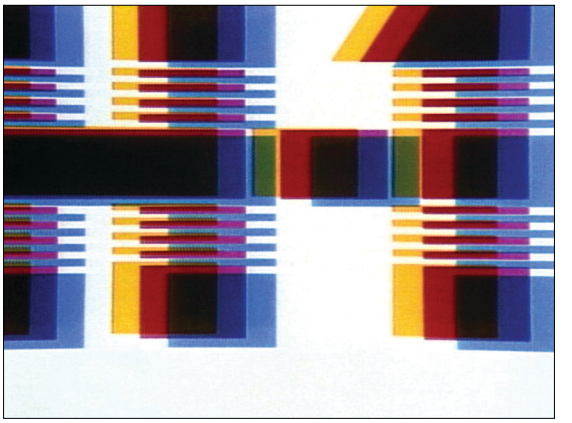
VIDEO HITS ONE 1985-1992
THE GREATEST HITS OF MUSIC VIDEO 1991-1992

Nothing stuck with viewers. We did some good work, and some of it was great, at least to us. We're proud of it. Hey, it seemed like nothing ever worked at VH1, even in the 30 years after we closed our company. The network continued to be distributed due to "bundling," which required that cable companies need to carry VH1 if they wanted the very successful channels MTV and Nickelodeon.

But alas, no one ever really *loved* VH1, no matter who did what.

Left:
Animated network identifications 1985 Buzzco, New York
Logo designed by George Lois LPG/Pon, New York

Animated network IDs 1985
Colossal Pictures, SF

Animated network IDs 1985
Buzzco, NY

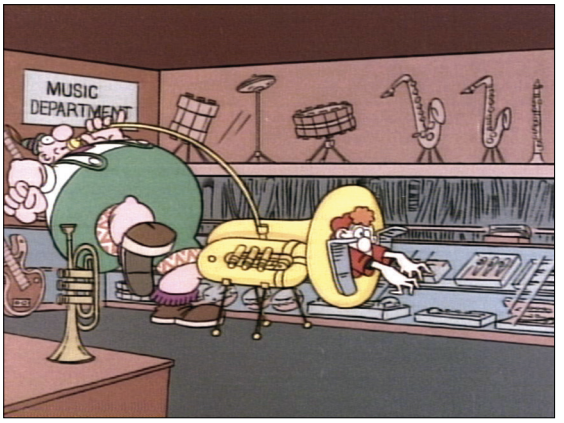
The generation dedicated to peace and love…

is the generation dedicated to peace and love.

VH1™

Because Baby Boomers deserve their own channel.

Advertising trade ad spread 1989
Creative/Art Direction/writer: Noel Frankel
Photography: Art Kane


MUSIC
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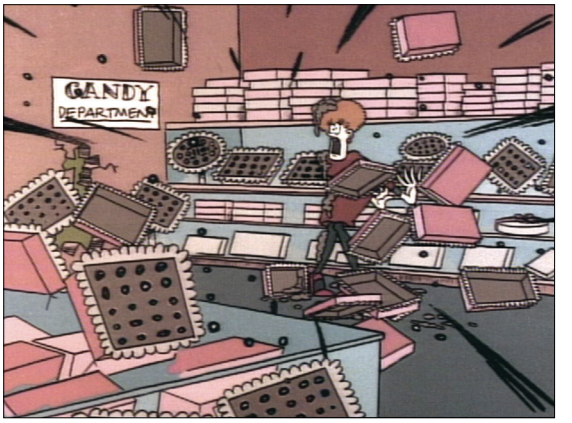
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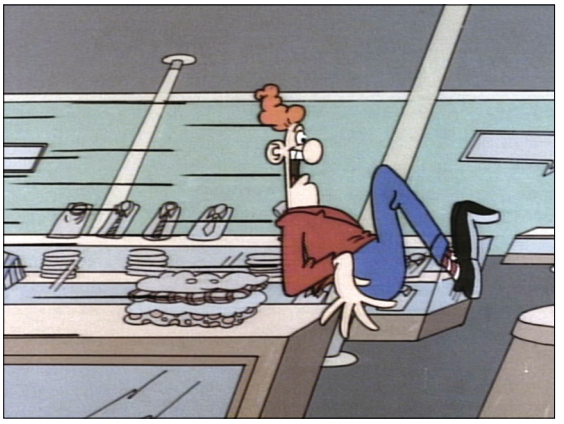

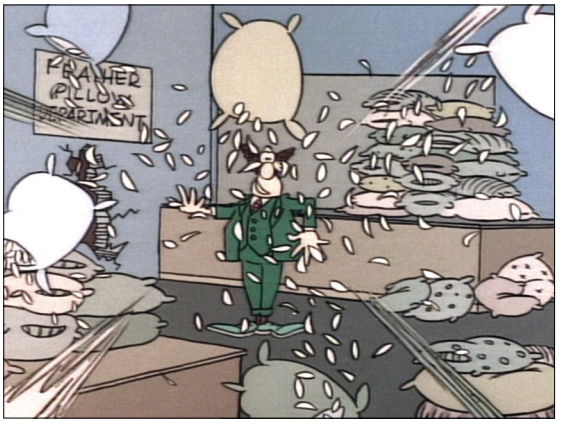

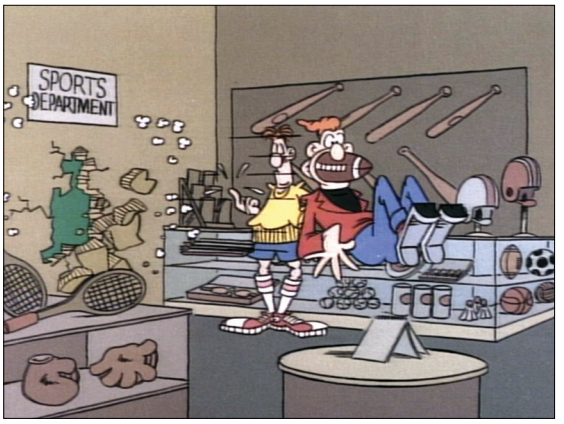
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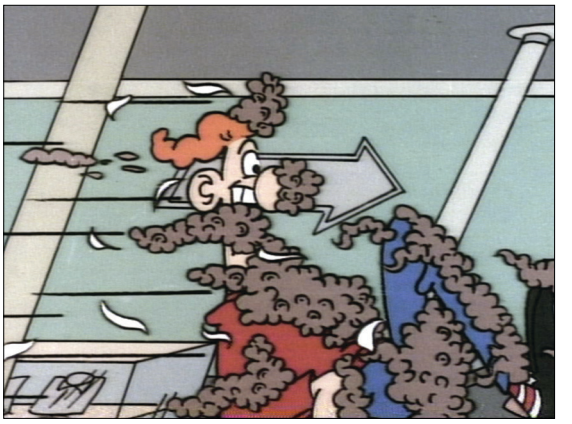
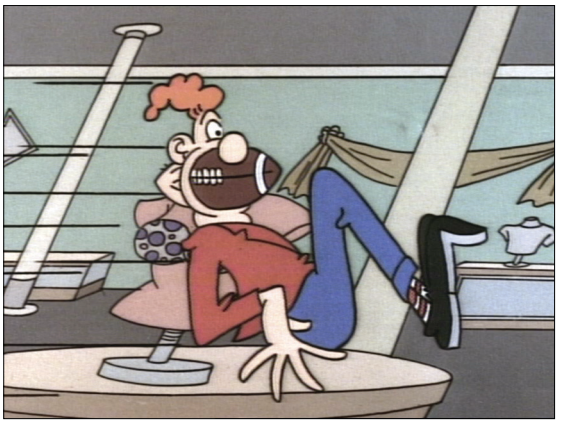
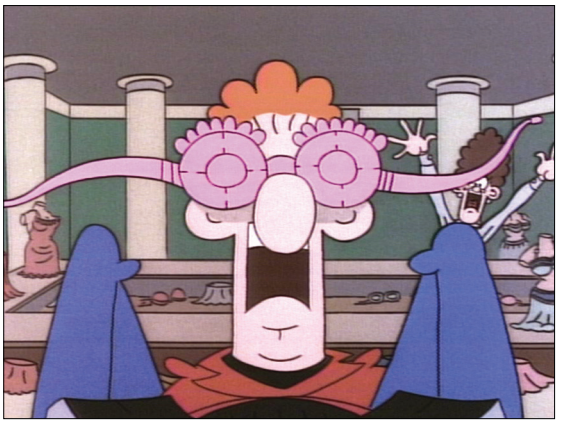
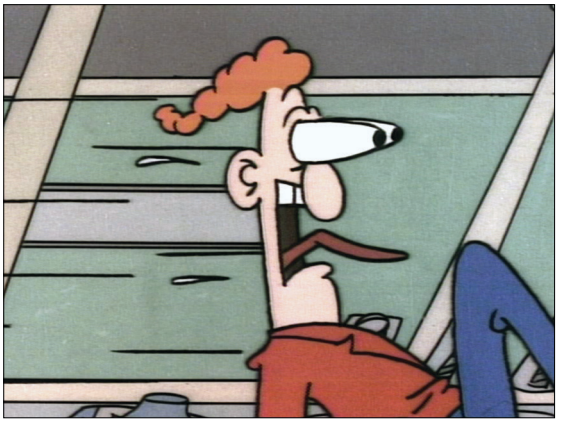
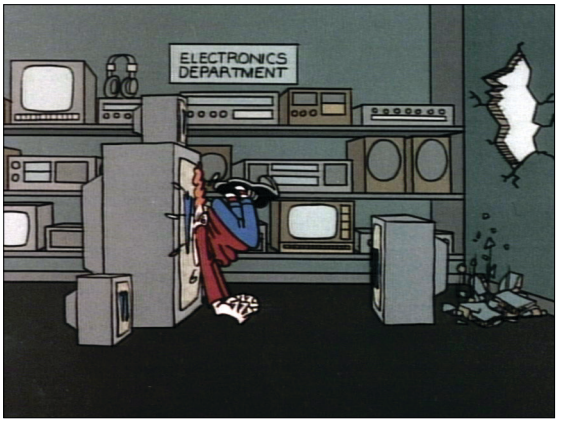
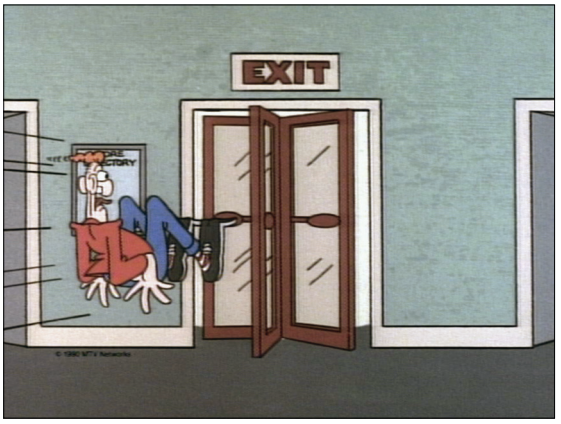


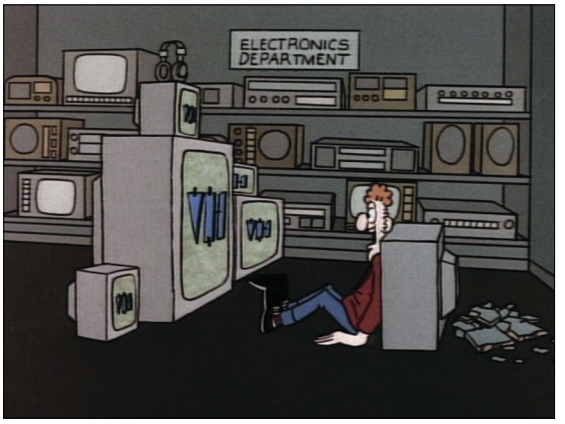


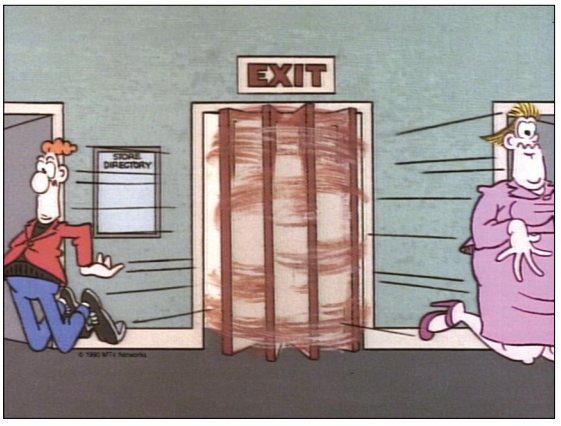


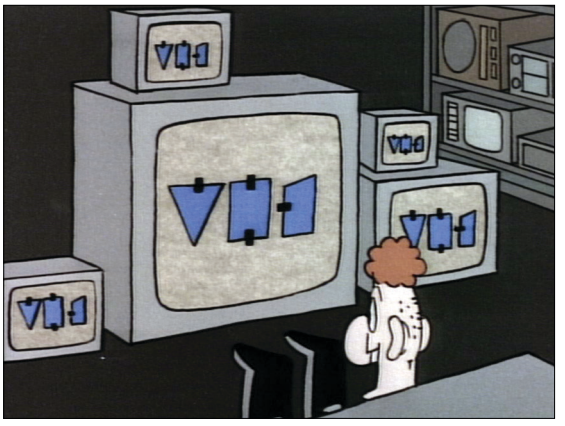


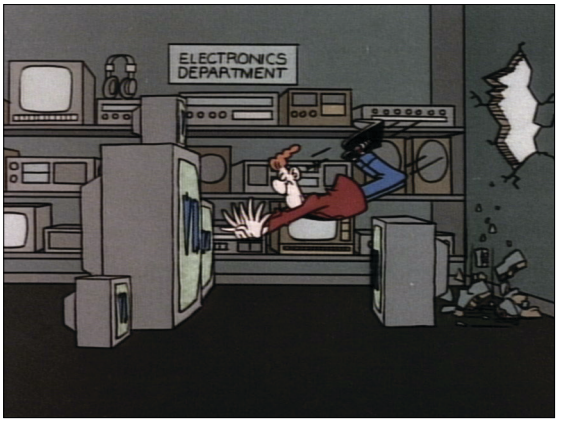




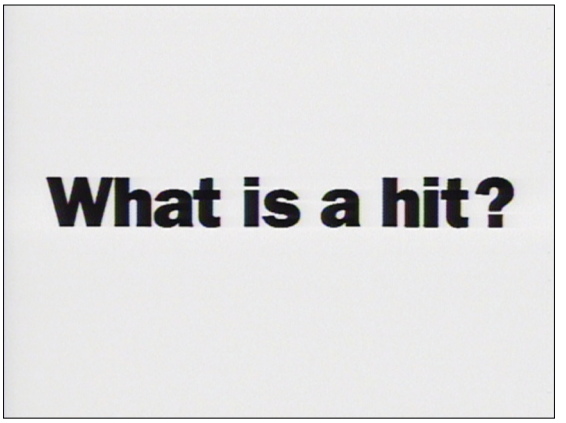








VH1 Commercial 1989
Created & written by Bill Burnett
Art by Don Martin
Animation by The Ink Tank
Produced by Tom Pomposello (Fred/Alan) and JJ Sedelmaier (Ink Tank)


What is a hit?

VH1 Commercial campaign 1991. Sting, Elton John, Whitney Houston, kd lang.
Creative director/writer: Bill Burnett Producer: Chris Koch

VH1: The Greatest Hits of Music Video Zbigniew Rybczynski NJ

Jingles produced by JAM Creative Dallas

VH1: The Greatest Hits of Music Video Alex Weil/Charlex 1991 *Jingles produced by JAM Creative Dallas*

Alan worked with the Columbia and Epic labels at CBS Records (now Sony Music) in his years before MTV. One day on our way to lunch on New York's Avenue of the Americas –then home of CBS and known as "media row"– we ran into a few of his former colleagues. They asked us to consider creating a video for their annual sales conference.

This video wouldn't be just any video. It would be almost an hour long and introduce hundreds of sales people to dozens of albums, from internationally famous artists and brand new ones too. Well, not just "introduce" them, but get the distribution branches all worked up to go out in the world and make sure those albums would be stocked in every music store, tiny and giant, and placed front and center when customers walked in.

The deadline was way too short and would require a ridiculous amount of production logistics. We dragged in Nancy Podbielniak, our friend and Alan's former CBS colleague, to help with the writing. We convinced our longtime audio collaborators, Clack Studios, to let us commandeer their operations on weekends, so we could personally edit the recordings.

Craziest of all, the assignment would mean that Alan would have to direct and interview artists not only in New York, but also in Los Angeles and London. In fact, to make our dates, Alan flew to the UK on the now discontinued, supersonic Concorde, did the production, and got back to New York in 26 hours. Whew!

The video turned out great, featuring The Clash, Nena, Luther Vandross, Ozzy Osbourne and his babies... and many, many more. Our Epic clients were ecstatic.

Above: Adam Ant [born Stuart Leslie Goddard] Opposite page, from upper left: Joe Strummer [The Clash], Luthor Vandross, Carly Simon, Rick Nielsen & Robin Zander [Cheap Trick], Cyndi Lauper, Stanley Clarke, and Ozzy, Kelly & Jack Osbourne.)

EPIC RECORDS: EPA ASSOCIATED LABELS 1984

"The Epic Epic"
Record company convention
Sales presentation video

Written by Alan Goodman and Nancy Podbielniak
Produced by Fred Seibert & Alan Goodman
Directed by Alan Goodman

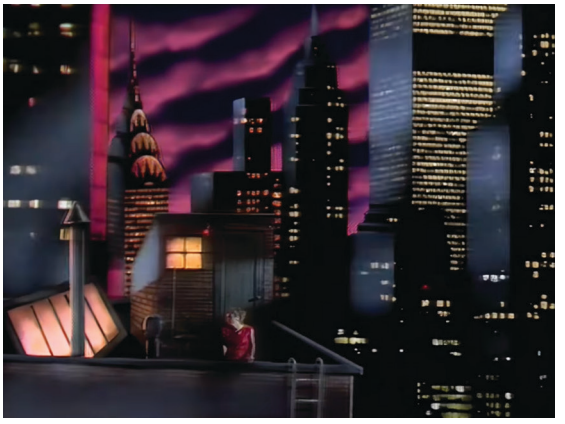
Amy goes pop!

Fred/Alan didn't really want to make music videos. Too much work for too little money. Besides, MTV had already given us an amazing, music based, creative rep. But, it was always tempting. After all, video music was the creative "edge" of the '80s. So, when Richard Frankel, our former WASEC co-worker, went over to A&M Records and asked us to work with him on Amy Grant's first post-Christian pop single... well, we took a shot.

Through Buzz Potamkin, we'd worked a bit with director Tommy Schlamme on the original "I Want My MTV!" commercials, tried to get a movie going with him *(page 305)* and enjoyed his forward thinking approach and genial manner, perfect for working with a musical artist like Amy. And, lucky for us, Amy's management was new enough to mainstream video that our MTV reputations made them comfortable enough to work with first time producers.

By 1985, the Quantel Paintbox video graphics tool was just starting to become "the look of TV in the '80s" –The Cars had just won the first MTV VMA for their Paintbox'd "You Might Think," courtesy of director Jeff Stein & Charlex, and Alan's former co-worker and Fred's wife to be, Robin Sloane– and interestingly, both our music video excursions *(pages 230, 232-3)* used it extensively, though in radically different ways.

Tommy took just the right approach to working with Amy, and to the modern world of production design. The video did its job and launched what became an amazing mainstream career for Amy Grant, making it into the Top 40 for her maiden voyage.



AMY GRANT

"Find A Way"

A&M Records

1985

Executive producers:
Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert

Directed by Thomas Schlamme
Produced by Linda Schaffer & Albie Hecht

Of course, not every project worked.

Our former MTV colleague and Swatch client Nancy Kadner Feingold introduced us to MCA Records' Larry Solters, the new executive vice president and right hand of CEO Irving Azoff. He had Fred/Alan create a few TV spots for their artists Joan Jett and The Fixx. But Irving and Larry wanted to give MCA a complete facelift, since it was a bit of an also ran in the hipster record business.

Above: Music Corporation of America 1956
Below: MCA Records 1990

Enter Fred/Alan, developers of the most famous music logo of the '80s.

Our first take was, in our humble opinion, shot down immediately. MCA's original parent was the Music Corporation of America, and according to their 1950s logo they controlled the world! Perfect, and they already owned it. It would only require a contemporary graphic execution.

Nope. That's old. We're new! Next.

One of our favorite design groups, Corey & Co. in Boston, had a instinctive attraction to our notion of a constantly morphing logo (see Nickelodeon), and we asked them to work with us on MCA.

They delivered, you can see their logo presentation on the opposite page.

We loved the mix and match of their Rubik's Cube solution. MCA didn't.

What was their solution? Absolute genius!

.....

Logo designed by
Tom Corey & Scott Nash Corey & Co., Boston
Creative directors:
Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert

MCA

RECORDS

1985

swatch

SWATCH

WATCH

HOLIDAY 1985

Starring The Fat Boys
Directed by Alan Goodman

The Fat Boys for Swatch

(previous four pages)

Fred: This commercial is Alan and all his talents at their best.

Our great friend and colleague from MTV, Nancy Kadner Feingold, had bought me a Swatch when they were first imported in 1983. Two years later, Max Imgrueth had set up a US office and Nancy was running marketing. Since Swatch's industrial design approach was essentially the same as MTV's ever changing logo she sensed a good fit and we started plotting some stuff together.

Alan and I loved Swatch's first TV commercial for MTV with hip-hop's The Fat Boys, and when Nancy and her colleague Steve Rechtshaffner intro'd us to their manager Charlie Stettler it was a lovefest, and we became friends for three decades.

Charlie was a total character. A Swiss national in New York City, he'd embraced hip-hop culture early and completely.

In 1983, MTV hadn't realized that hip-hop had captured the most forward thinking members of its audience. And here's where Charlie showed his business street smarts. He wanted his rappers to get national television exposure, Swatch needed to be on the cutting edge. MTV was still new enough that the ad rates were perfect for a new company that couldn't afford the giant traditional networks. A trio made for the moment.

Charlie made a perfect fee-free deal, putting the boys and MTV together for Swatch's first American commercial. Two years later, Swatch wanted to make a spot for their limited edition Christmas watch and they wanted The Fat Boys again. Nancy, Steve, and Charlie asked Fred/Alan to create it.

Up until that point we'd only done media promotion, never anything for an actual, physical product, so we took the assignment seriously. As seriously as you could with an act that weighed almost a ton between them.

Alan, our resident writer and director, constructed a spot that fused the hip-hop spirit of improvisation and the slickness of TV. The bit with the couple on the couch being interrupted by Buffy, the Human Beatbox was scripted. The "Swatch" shouts and the rap bed were improvised in the back of the shooting stage. Alan constructed the track in the mixing studio and the video graphics in the video in a post-production suite.

Alan: I remember only that Buffy had no underwear and we had to stitch two pair together.*

Also, I experienced the ultimate director humility when, with me four inches from his face directing him in the scene, I watched as his eyes settled and closed and he fell asleep (hey, it was after lunch and he was taking 'antibiotics'). I had no idea what the track would be or how to end it until I heard The Fat Boys rapping 'Ho, ho, ho' in the next room. Which taught me the rule I live by: be 100 percent prepared and 30 percent flexible.

* Sourced, with some difficulty, by Assistant Producer Daria McLean

Swatch Limelight

Client: Swatch USA
Nancy Kadner Feingold
Steve Rechtschaffner

Agency: Fred/Alan, New York
Director/writer: Alan Goodman
Producer: Linda Schaffer
Assistant Producer: Daria McLean
Production Manager: Steve Shepard
Executive producers:
Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert

Myers's Rum Video Network

(pages 226 & 227)

In 1986 music videos were still the coolest thing on earth and Alan's colleague from the record business, Steve Dessau, thought there was a way to make some money with them.

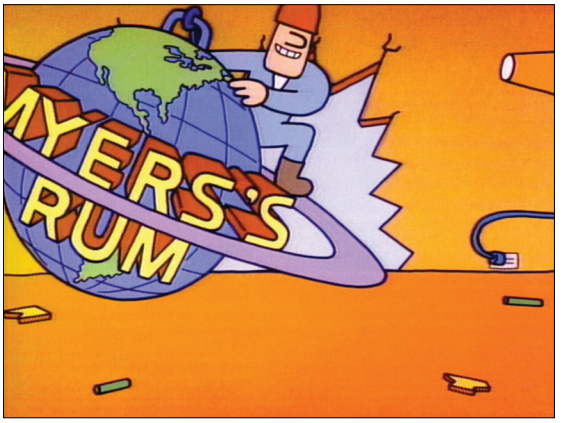
Edgar Bronfman Jr. had just taken over Seagram's, his family's liquor business, and was obsessed with pop music (later, he sold Seagram's to buy the Polygram music company). He was frustrated that hard liquor couldn't use television to sell its wares and that he couldn't take advantage of his favorite entertainment trend. And he knew Myers's Rum was losing ground with younger drinkers.

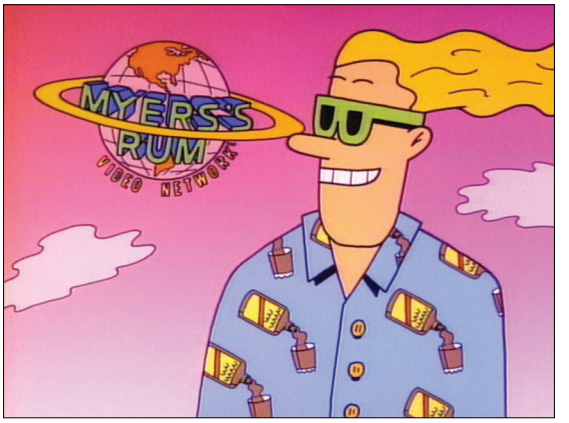
Who better to sell an idea to him than the only credible creative MTV guys who weren't working at MTV anymore?

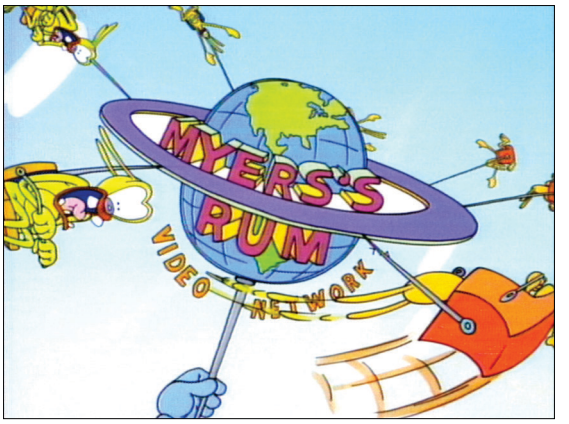
Partnering with Steve's company (we set up a venture called Mystery Train Partners), we convinced Edgar Jr. that the Myers's Rum Video Network could be his own "network" at the "video nightclubs" that were springing up around the country. It worked pretty well.

Mystery Train Partner:
Steve Dessau
Account Executive:
Mike Shavelson
Assistant AE:
Tom Leonardis

Mystery Train Partners' business card
Designed by
Kathy Seibert Carey

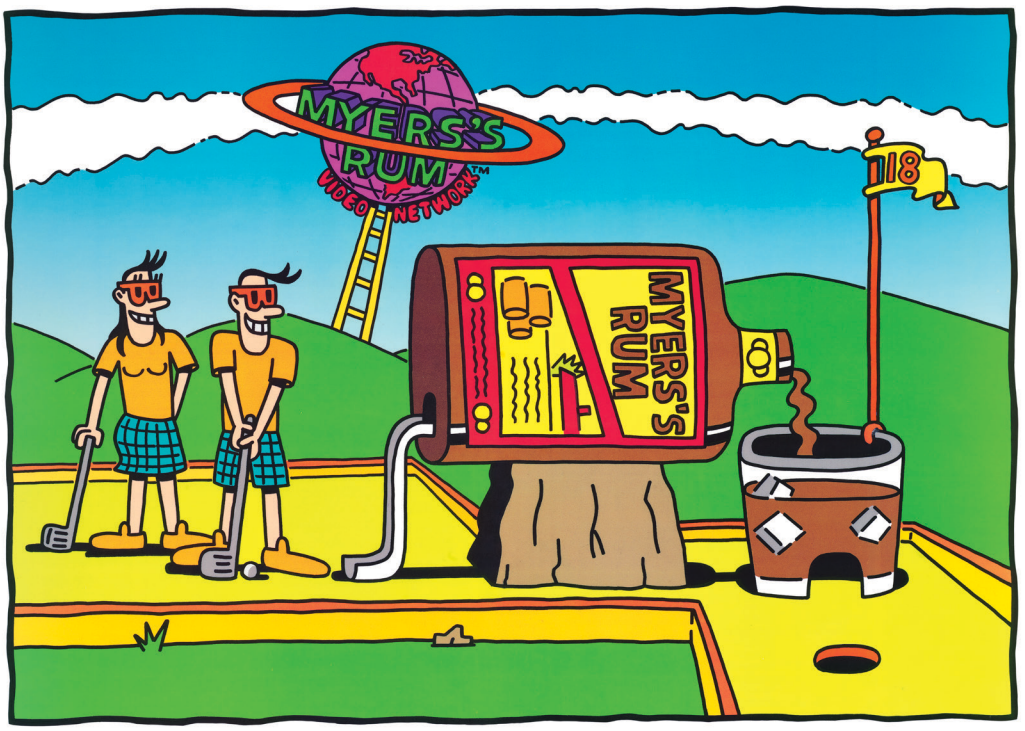






Myers's Rum Video Network IDs: Joey Ahlbum NY, Charlex NY, International Rocketship, Vancouver

MYERS'S RUM



VIDEO NETWORK

1986

PRODUCED IN ASSOCIATION WITH STEVE DESSAU

Poster designed & illustrated by Joey Ahlbum

We can't meet Mr. Brown?!

(pages 232 & 233)

"PEACE! UNITY! LOVE! And HAVING FUN!"

Our second, and last, music video. Ah... to work with the Hardest-Working Man in Show Business, the Godfather of Soul, Mr. Dynamite, and Soul Brother No. 1!

JB was half a decade away from his latest chart hit and hip-hop was beginning to explode, completely usurping The Godfather of Funk's excitement. A pioneering Bronx DJ, Afrika Bambatta, had hit it big in 1982 and was looking for his way back on the charts.

Tommy Boy Records, born the same year as MTV, was still pretty much a New York phenomenon. After their groundbreaking mix "No Sellout," featuring Malcom X on the first sampled record, we picked up the phone and quickly became fast friends with founder Tom Silverman and president/creative director Monica Lynch.

Imagine our thrill when they asked for help on "Unity," a duet between a classic soul artist and a hip-hop pioneer.

Only, they already shot the video. On a crummy VHS tape with only the recording studio lights. Could we help?

Fred/Alan music producer Tom Pomposello stepped in, with former MTV promo director Marcy Brafman, took the Quantel Paintbox, just like the Amy Grant video and made it a Bam/JB video.

After all was said and done, we (sort of) worked with James Brown!

A Current Affair *is an*

American television newsmagazine program that aired in syndication from July 28, 1986 to August 30, 1996, before it was briefly re-broadcast from March to October 2005. The program was produced by Fox Television Stations, and based at Fox's New York City flagship station WNYW, starting as a local production in 1986. It was syndicated to Fox's other owned-and-operated stations the next year, and then went into full national syndication in September 1988. Its signature "ka-chung" sound effect was created using a combination of the sound of a construction paper cutter and the swing of a golf club put through a synthesizer.

–Wikipedia 2023

The American "A Current Affair" was exported from Australia at the insistence of New Corps (and Fox) CEO Rupert Murdoch.

Fox commissioned Fred/Alan to cr audio signature for the show's introduction. Alan took the assignment.

Alan:
If it matters, there are actually 11 different sounds in there, some electronic, some natural sound effects. I wish I could remember all of them, but through the hours and hours of creating it we added things and removed things and I can't remember what made the cut, but I'm pretty sure there's a screen door slam in there as well, unless we took it out.

As Wikipedia posted, the "ka-chung" (three years before 'Law & Order' burned into the world's consciousness) used an early synthesizer to combine a golf swing and a paper cutter.

Pure Alan.

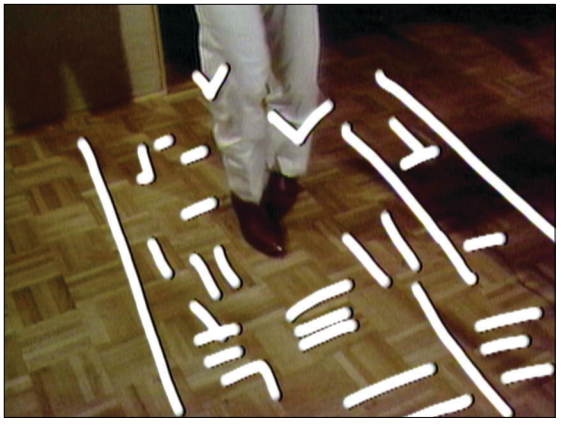
FOX TELEVISION STATIONS -20th CENTURY FOX TELEVISION

1985-2005

Audio trademark sound design conceived and produced by Alan Goodman

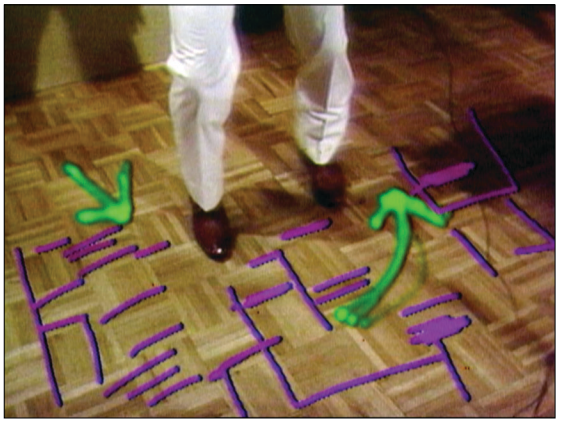
Peace

LOVE



LOVE

HAVIN' FUN
N' FUN



AFRIKA BAMBAATAA
JAMES BROWN

Tommy Boy Records
1987

"Unity" written by James Brown, Khayan Aasim Bambaataa, Douglas Wimbish, Bernard Alexander Keith LeBlanc Robin Haplin

Music video: Produced by Tom Pomposello
Video illustration by Marcy Brafman
Edited by Peter Caesar

Fred/Alan was founded to make television shows. History made sure it was our **Chauncey Street Productions** instead.

In fact, the two of us quit our jobs at MTV Networks to produce "Hot Rocks" (*page 118 & 119*), a series at the Playboy Channel. But, after that debacle, branding and marketing took a higher bill paying priority for a while. There were some big and small shows here and there, but it wasn't until 1987 we decided to hit it head on.

Albie Hecht was one of Alan's closest friends, we all went to college together, and worked together at the university's WKCR. Like us, he'd worked in the music business as a record company executive, writer, and manager (Crack the Sky and Dean Friedman) but morphed into television, starting to establish his reputation. Our company was becoming a full service advertising agency, and we realized if we brought Albie in to run the agency's commercial production, we could have our cake and eat it too. We set up a joint venture, and Albie took on the task of establishing us in series and specials production. Albie and Alan took the lead on all our shows.

(Not for nothing, when we all decided to partner Albie, who's given name is Alan, realized he'd now be known professionally as "Albie" forever.)

Fred/Alan's original home was Jackie Gleason's production office in Manhattan, so we named Chauncey Street Productions after the street Ralph Kramden and Ed Norton lived on in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn in "The Honeymooners" series. We asked Corey & Co. to design a logo that adapted The Honeymooners print work we'd done for Showtime (*pages 123-125*).

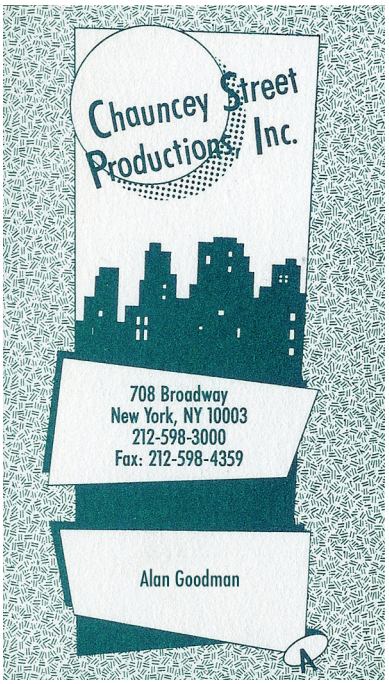
We had a good run. Despite all the scripts that never sold (par for the course), we made series for MTV, Nickelodeon, Comedy Central, and AMC, and pilot specials for CBS, A&E, and VH1.

CHAUNCEY STREET

PRODUCTIONS

1987-1992

Albie Hecht
Alan Goodman
Fred Seibert



Stationary design by
Tom Corey & Scott Nash
Corey & Co. Boston

Photographs of Albie Hecht
by Elena Seibert

Cinemax presents
"Greetings from Gilbert"

aka "Gilbert Gottfried...Naturally"

Thanks to Barbara Kanowitz, Gilbert Gottfried, the comic's comic, became MTV's first comedy star. MTV was still growing its audience in 1986, but it did get Gilbert his first TV special.

Fred/Alan's first dream was to produce TV shows. We'd never made one, but we wanted to. For our first project, we partnered with producer Buzz Potamkin to come up with a show for the Playboy Channel. Things went south with them after the third episode and we left. The good news is that we got ourselves agents. That's the ticket, they'll help us sell our shows.

Well, not really. The good news is they introduced us to Stu Smiley, another young'un who was trying to get things going. Eventually he became a comedy exec at Showtime, then at HBO, then he scored big. But in the meantime, we pitched him shows.

"Make it funnier!" he'd write on our scripts.

And then, one day, Stu gave us our big break. When we finally came up with the right talent, the right idea and the right director, Stu was there for us.

Fred: After... ahem.... interesting experiences creating a music video show for The Playboy Channel and producing the second Farm Aid concert for VH1, Cinemax's "Greetings for Gilbert" –our first real TV show production– put Fred/Alan, and third production partner Albie Hecht, on track.

In 1986, MTV was in its first moment of maturing success with all music videos all the time. The promotion department that I'd started was being run by the expansively creative Judy McGrath who'd put together an incredible team that continually found new ways to express the rebellious, outsider spirit that was rock'n'roll. And, it was in the '80s that comedians and rockers sealed their alliance that really blossomed during this first national cable TV era.

Writer/producer/director Barbara Kanowitz was one of MTV's best. And Barbara's the one who made Gilbert Gottfried famous.

One day, seemingly out of nowhere, an obvious New Yorker, a comedian in a blue tuxedo jacket, burst onto the screen at MTV, in a dozen or so short films. They were hilarious, for sure. But, from my perspective, as the architect of MTV's "branding" strategy –aka, how to make the "M" famous– Gilbert Gottfried's riffs weren't only hilarious, they were on message. The promos insinuated our branding "promises" into your head without seeming like they were actually messages.

And Barbara's directing and editing... the spots were gorgeous.

Barbara Kanowitz: I don't really remember much about the origin of the spots, Gilbert didn't have much of a following at that point. I do remember his William Morris agent selling him pretty hard.

CINEMAX HBO 1987

"Greetings from Gilbert"

Directed by
Thomas Schlamme

Produced by
Albie Hecht

Production design:
RSE Robert Small

Executive producers:
Alan Goodman &
Fred Seibert

I did know that Gilbert would be wearing his infamous blue tuxedo jacket and thought that it would pop against the white cyc (or maybe the white cyc was all we had the budget for – honestly, I don't remember). Each spot had a marketing message that Gilbert was to espouse on.

I asked him to speak to each marketing point the same way in different angles and locations with a locked camera so that we could pop him around the frame in post. Of course, Gilbert never repeated anything more than once, he just went off on tangents – which of course was the beauty of him and those spots.

I worked with Gilbert recently and it was nice to see him, he's still as funny as ever.

Fred: We saw those spots, and like everyone watching MTV we fell in love with Gilbert. Maybe this would get Fred/Alan into the TV specials business!

Our friend Stu Smiley was a top comedy executive at HBO/Cinemax, which was then the top TV comedy venue, and he'd had been generous to us in many ways, trying to help us get something going.

Without Stu, who knows where we would have been?

Alan: I always remember all the stuff around the show.

I went to see Gilbert almost nightly in the month leading up to the taping, at Catch a Rising Star or The Improv, to become super familiar with his set and talk about what to use. I never in my life saw a comic blow so hot and so cold. The very first time we saw him was at Caroline's original club on 9th Avenue in the 20s I think. I remember we went with Tommy Schlamme and his wife, and she was gushing after it was over. From his "thank you.. thank you.. no stop! stop!" that started the show until he left the stage, the laughter never stopped for a second. Continuous, deafening laughter. On other nights, there'd be crickets.

He got into the habit of coming to the office in the afternoon, and planting himself in my office until it was time to go out. He'd sit there all afternoon telling me jokes. Gilbert doesn't much tell jokes in his act, but he knows a trillion jokes and he would just go nonstop. One day he was telling me how much he dislikes Seinfeld, who was just another guy in the clubs back then. He started imitating Seinfeld, but without the jokes. "Did you ever wonder why a pencil has an eraser only on one end, and not the other? What's up with that?" Again, he wouldn't stop and his impression was spot on. That night at Catch, he couldn't get one laugh. Not one. It was a terrible crowd. Out of nowhere, unannounced and unexplained, he just started doing his joke-less Seinfeld. For me. Because he knew at least one person would be laughing.

When we had wrapped, he continued to come to the office for a few weeks, to sit in my room because he had nothing else to do all day. Eventually I had to tell him I had moved on to other projects. I remember he never stopped by without leaving with a couple of pens, a pad of

paper, whatever he could carry out of there.

The reason behind the baby blue dinner jacket is that he had established something of a presence in the fabulous rants Barbara Kanowitz Small had developed with him for MTV. That was his wardrobe for those spots and we wanted to piggyback on the recognition.

I also remember a couple days before the shoot Tommy was very ill. There was some talk that I would have to direct. Thank goodness he recovered, because I would really have fucked this up.

I found a video tape of this show, credited to FRED/ALLEN Inc, on HBO Video in a bargain bin years later, paired on the same tape with his "Norman's Corner" produced by our pals Peter Rosenthal and Steve Oakes, written by an equally unknown Larry David. I have it still shrink-wrapped with the price sticker, $2.95.

This was also the show when I learned that, if the network tells you "We don't pay a lot of money for these comedy experiments, but we leave you alone, you don't get a lot of notes," it means you won't get much money, and you will still get a thousand notes.

I wonder what happened to the LP we made from the special that QMI Music was going to release? Gilbert and I traveled down to Memphis together for the launch party of QMI, and as we were walking through the airport he looked around at the distinctively Southern Christian inhabitants. "Somewhere in this airport is a digital counter," he said, "and when you and I got off the plane it clicked up to three. When we go back to New York, it'll go back down to one." Albie: Wowser! - (You know, Gilbert will probably ask us for additional payment!)

Best set I never built!

I walked into American Place Theatre and they had a Sam Shepard play which had an amazing Airstream trailer in a desert and I said, "I'll take it!" – made the deal to keep it for our show.

We're always working with first timers!

Tommy Schlamme who was an amazing film director had rarely done multi-camera shows, so of course we chose him to direct since we knew he had great comedic timing and creative pov. Which was true and made this show so successful but when we began shooting and he starting calling the cameras and called for camera 2 – there was dead silence in the truck - and then the TD said "We're on 2"– without losing a beat Schlamme says "and stay on 2, it's a beautiful shot" and from then on he was perfect.

"Working with the unpredictable!"

Gilbert was and is a unique and special talent. When he walked out of the trailer at the top of the show and immediately went to his water pitcher and says "I'm having a glass of water," the audience broke into big laughs and we thought –we're home free– But then he kept repeating it "I'm having a glass of water' – after the third time, I looked at Alan in the truck and said "we're f-ed" – but Al was cool and said "wait for it" and after

Gilbert repeating it another 3 times, the audience started roaring and that actually went on for 10 minutes.

Not all of it made the final cut but a big moment (and learning moment)!!!

Alan: A story I have told many times is about our ACE Award for the special.

Yes, the Airstream was already there, and it's a small detail but we couldn't move it because we shot during a two-day hiatus of a play that was in the theater. The play was coming back, and we were told we couldn't move it. Instead, we built around it. And thanks to the pre-existing trailer (and some additional dressing by Bob [Small] and Jimmy [Burns]), we got our first ACE Award... for set design!

Fred: "Greetings from Gilbert" was a eureka! moment for us. Alan, Albie and I started to think it was more than a dream. We actually had a future in this business! We started Chauncey Street Productions as our label for the shows we would go on to produce.

Ah, show business!

"Your favorite music" MTV promo starring Gilbert, directed by Barbara Kanowitz

MTV
Your Favorite Music

Kids' Choice Awards Nickelodeon 1988

The blood was quickly draining from the faces of Gerry Laybourne and Debby Beece.

Chauncey Street –Albie Hecht, Alan, Fred– was describing a scene of hopeful optimism for an annual kids' award show –*the Kids' Choice Awards*– Nickelodeon should produce. “There’ll be the biggest movie stars in the world while 10,000 kids will be screaming at the top of their lungs!”

"But why will any stars come to a Nickelodeon kids' awards show?"

In 1988, Nickelodeon was only three years into its Fred/Alan revival. Even with the network at #1 in the ratings, Nick management was, smartly, still working like the channel was an underdog. It allowed the staff to keep their creative and business edges, striving to be the best.

As much as Nick had grown, the general perception was that The Disney Channel was bigger. It wasn't true, not by a long shot, but Disney clearly had a bigger brand name in the public's –and the media business's– imagination. So the underdog needed to keep up the pressure.

We thought the Kids' Choice Awards, executed well, could be Nickelodeon's nail in The Disney Channel coffin.

Gerry and Debby became convinced, as did the MTV Networks higher ups, that with cable in 50 million American homes in the late 1980s, and Nick at #1 in the ratings (not to mention the dominance of Nick-at-Nite), in addition to kids, parents –and please, movie stars were parents too!– were more excited about Nickelodeon than anyone realized. And the chance to be in the presence of a live Nick show would draw out the crowds.

It was still an uphill battle to mount the show. Budget would be an issue for several years, convincing Universal's Hollywood theme park to give us one of their pavilions for free was, to say the least, a triumph of negotiation (we promised that we’d feature the tour in the show!). And those movie star guests? That took a while.

The first show host was Tony Danza, then flying high on "Who's the Boss," Nick network ID singers, Eugene Pitt & the Jive Five and teen pop sensation Debbie Gibson. And maybe most prophetic of all, guest presenters included a star of the sitcom "Head of the Class," Brian Robbins. "Prophetic?" Well, after several years of being a hit television producer with partner Michael Tollin ("Smallville," "All That," "One Tree Hill"), in 2018 Brian became the president of Nickelodeon.

Albie went on to become the Nickelodeon's President of Film and TV entertainment where he produced all the Kids' Choice shows until he was named Spike TV's founding CEO in 2003.

Not for nothing, after we shut down Fred/Alan, Albie continued with Chauncey. His KCA persistence led to a steady build and the 1998 10th Annual Kids' Choice Awards was held at UCLA's Pauley Pavilion. The sold out capacity? 10,000 screaming kids.

.....

Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards created by Alan Goodman, Albie Hecht & Fred Seibert Chauncey Street Productions, New York

The Kids Choice Award
Blimp Kaleidoscope
Designed by Tom Corey & Scott Nash
and Albie Hecht

The Movie Masters! American Movie Classics 1989

Albie Hecht (executive producer & co-creator): "My favorite!"

Christine Ecklund (producer/writer): "Wow. Bet I can still answer every question. ("Ucipital Mapilary")

Before *Mad Men,* before *Breaking Bad* and *The Walking Dead,* AMC was actually "American Movie Classics," the Turner Classic Movies of its time, a cable channel exclusively focused on, duh, movies from the heyday of Hollywood. (In fact, the former head of AMC programming would become the creator of TMC.)

Towards the end of the 80s, channels that relied on acquired, cost efficient stuff like AMC (or Nick-at-Night or USA or even MTV) were realizing that advertisers and cable operators were on the hunt for programming that could excite viewers.

The Movie Masters was one of AMC's first jumps into the pool, and obviously, it wasn't the approach that worked like crazy for them. Fred/Alan's primary Showtime client, Josh Sapan, had become AMC's leader and thought that our Chauncey Street Productions might have an idea for a network series.

Original television production, even when it's done efficiently, is pretty expensive. And the explosion of cable TV had exploded in terms of dozens of channels, but it was still trying to figure out how to make enough money to thrive. The financial picture wouldn't really come into its own until the end of the 1990s. All the networks we worked with over the years approached originals very gingerly, and American Movie Classics was one of the most, um, fiscally careful.

Well, Chauncey Street was a perfect fit for a deliberate situation. We were still feeling our way in series production and we were well aware we weren't yet booking the big gigs.

Chauncey Street majordomo Albie Hecht loved game shows (CSP went on to produce Turn It Up! for MTV, Kid's Court and GUTS for Nickelodeon, and Albie oversaw many more as president of Nickelodeon production). He and Alan created the idea for The Movie Masters, with the notion that it would recreate the salad days of broadcast network quiz shows.

To that end we ran dozens of casting calls at our office, talking to everyone including musical legends Betty Comden and Margaret Whiting, before coming to the conclusion that we'd replicate a classic quiz show line up (American Movie Classics, right!). The production landed on The Match Game's Gene Rayburn as host, and actress and veteran quiz panelist Peggy Cass, New York Times' theater critic Clive Barnes, and actress and To Tell the Truth stalwart Kitty Carlisle as contestants.

The production came off with only a few hitches and delivered on time and on budget. It was a hoot working with such revered acting, writing and television royalty. AMC would eventually find their way to "prestige" TV, but as far as we were concerned, we did a wonderful job in the name of the greatest movies of all time.

.....

The Movie Masters!
Created by Albie Hecht & Alan Goodman
Producer/writer: Christine Ecklund
Director: Michael Bernhaut
Business Affairs: Elliot Krowe
Executive Producers: Alan Goodman, Albie Hecht, Fred Seibert
Chauncey Street Productions, New York

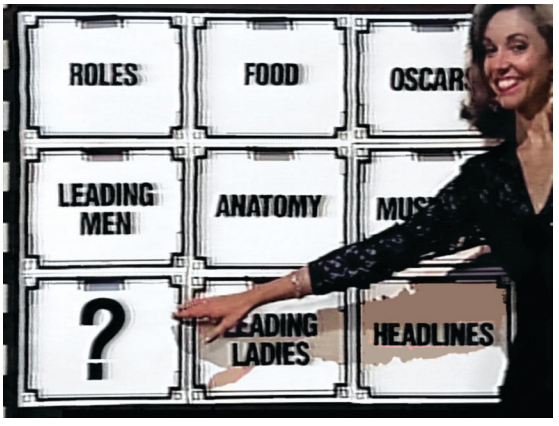
THE
MOVIE
MASTERS

THE
MOVIE
MASTERS

10
PEGGY CASS
CLIVE BARNES
KITTY CARLISLE

10

THE
MOVIE
MASTERS


ROLES
FOOD
LEADING MEN
ANATOMY
?
HEADLINES

AMERICAN
MOVIE
CLASSICS

The Talent Pool
HA! TV Comedy Network
1990

"Performance Artist" was the term of art in the late 80s. As producer Christine Ecklund remembers Albie Hecht's definition, "...longer form material, no joke tellers. A downtown feel."

Monologist Spaulding Gray had a hipster success with his performance piece (and eventual film) "Swimming to Cambodia." His recitation of his travel, writing and acting experiences, mixed pathos and humor to engaged audiences for several years in New York theater.

When MTV Networks launched HA! in 1990 we pitched channel head Debby Beece that among Gray's contemporaries were humorists with the goods that would hone the network's reputation with up and coming talent.

"The Talent Pool" set up shop in midtown Manhattan's Lamb's Theatre, site of a beautiful gospel brunch, and started casting about for an anthology of performance artists. Between Chauncey Street and the network we settled on (clockwise from the top left on the opposite page):

• **Frank Maya** was one of the first openly gay male comics to gain a foothold in mainstream stand-up comedy, who sadly passed away from AIDS in 1995.

• **John Leguizamo** is a writer and actor who went on to win four Tony Awards, appear in over 100 films, and whose Columbian/Latino roots and community are always up front.

• **Lewis Black**, whose angry rants about history, politics, religion, and cultural trends eventually gave him a regular perch on "The Daily Show."

• **Jim Turner** became a star when MTV presented him as his creation Randee of the Redwoods. He later acted in movies and TV.

• **Julie Hayden** was a delightful writer and actress who was later in Ben Stiller's "The Cable Guy" with Jim Carrey, She was finding her way in the TV pilot season when she died of cancer in 1997.

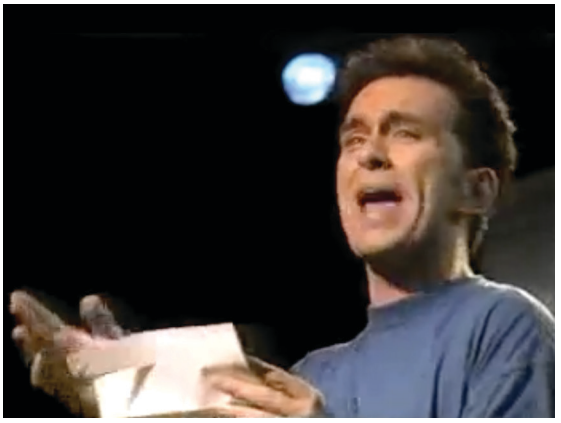
• **Chucklehead**, a troupe whose comedy addressed fears of the Cold War, entropy, mortality, and the likelihood not enough tickets would be sold at their shows.

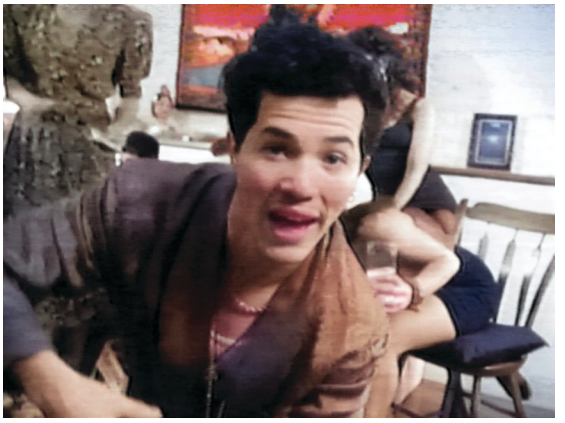
• **Jeffrey Essman** (not pictured), was often referred to as avant-garde, but was a hilarious writer and often costumed performer and a Benedictine monk.

• **Danitra Vance** (not pictured), was a comedian and actress who came to great attention in the 1985 season of "Saturday Night Live." She was on The Talent Pool during her diagnosis and eventual death from breast cancer. She was awarded with an Obie and NAACP Image Award.

• **Barry Yourgrau** (not pictured), a South African born writer and performer, has published several books and whose fictions have appeared in the New Yorker, Paris Review, VICE, Bomb, Poetry, and Film Comment.

The show wasn't particularly highly rated, but we were completely taken by each of our fantastic cast and heartened when so many of them went on to highly visible and acclaimed careers.





Clockwise from upper left: Frank Maya, John Leguizamo, Lewis Black, Jim Turner, Julie Hayden, Chucklehead.

"The Talent Pool"
Created by Albie Hecht & Alan Goodman
Producers: Christine Ecklund & Craig Coffman
Directors: Craig Coffman, Dana Calderwood
Business Affairs: Elliot Krowe, Jim Arnoff
Executive Producers:
Alan Goodman, Albie Hecht, Fred Seibert
Chauncey Street Productions, New York

777-FILM
Moviefone
1990

"Hello! And welcome to Moviefone!"

-Russ Leatherman, 'Mr. Moviefone'

Moviefone Movie Theatre spot #1

Sound effect: telephone busy signal

Announcer:
There's one phone number for movie showtime information that's never busy. Find out where and when it's playing. Call 777-FILM.
When all that matters is the movie.

Before there was a consumer internet, getting to the movies was a pain. Even figuring out whether a particular movie was playing in a given week at what theater required a logistic enterprise. It usually involved getting a local newspaper and sifting through columns of "listings" to figure out what showtimes were. You couldn't be sure if there were tickets available and whether or not there were a few next to each other. Or whether they were in the front or back rows, and squeezed you in the middle of a long row. Heaven forbid, if you lived in a city with dozens of movie houses.

Enter entrepreneur, innovator and filmmaker Andrew Jarecki. Partnering with the original conceptualizer Russ Leatherman, they founded Moviefone to solve the problem. Just dial *777-FILM* and life got easier. Now you could immediately know what movies were playing where, at what time, and whether there were tickets available. Voilà!

We met Andrew through our friends at Charlex and signed on as Moviefone's first agency. Together, we quickly came up with several 20-second spots that would play in their partnered theaters and started running them in New York and Los Angeles.

Lo and behold! Moviefone was ringing off the hook, maximizing theater –and Moviefone!– profits. Soon, Andrew had figured out how to use call volume to predict ticket demand, which allowed film producers to target their advertising to optimum effect, and of course, more success for all!

The company was acquired by AOL at the height of the first internet craze. Andrew went on to become an Academy Award nominated filmmaker ("Capturing the Friedmans") and produce and direct "The Jinx" for HBO and "Catfish" for MTV.

.....

Actors: Albie Hecht & Paula Brinkman
Director: Albie Hecht
Producer: Chris Strand
Production: Chauncey Street Productions
Agency: Fred/Alan

A FREE SERVICE
FROM YOUR
LOCAL THEATRES

CALL
777-FILM
When all that matters is the movie.

Thirteen
WNET NEW YORK
Rockschool

1988

Hosted by Herbie Hancock

Thirteen is the PBS affiliate in New York, and not exactly known for cultural programming that appealed to the young'uns. But, we got to know someone there, David Thomas, who wanted to try.

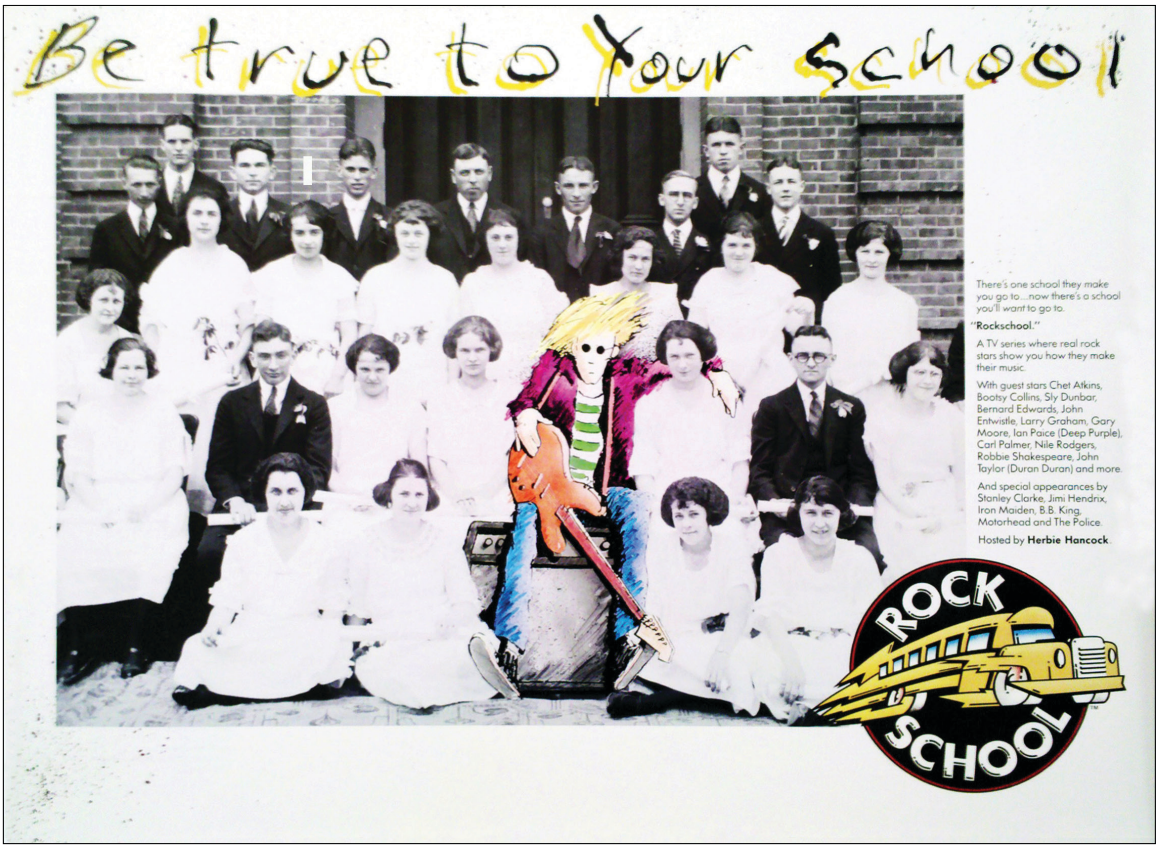
The station bought US rights to 'Rockschool,' a UK series that –even though 'rock' was a fading genre, hip-hop was in its ascendancy– wanted to teach the basics of popular music.

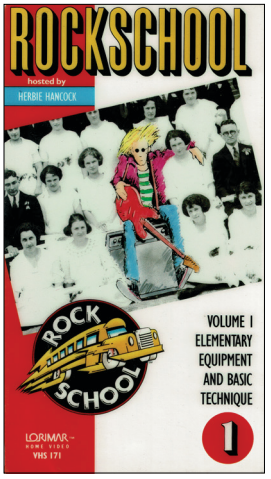
David hired Herbie Hancock to 'American-ize' the thing, and who else to hire to put it all together but a company run by a couple of MTV folks?

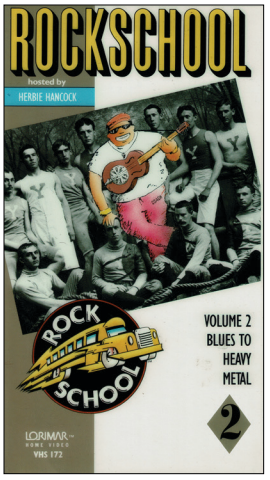
.....

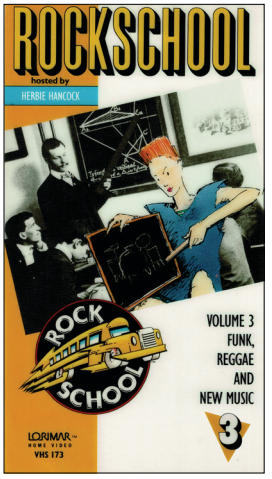
Producer: Tom Pomposello
Associate producer: Tina Potter
Creative directors:
Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert
Art direction: Corey & Co., Boston
Client: David Thomas, Thirteen

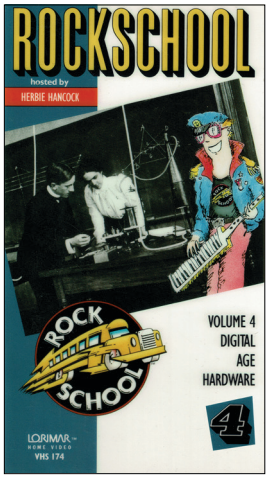
Herbie Hancock hosts **ROCKSCHOOL**, a new, eight-part music education series teaching the technique, theory and craft behind today's music. Produced by the BBC, **ROCKSCHOOL** is presented nationally on public television by WNET/New York, and premieres on most stations the week of October 20*. Each half-hour program concentrates on the interaction of guitar, bass and drums in a rock band, and features studio demonstrations, interviews with rock artists, and concert sequences. (*Check local listings.)
(Photo: Gerard Murrell)

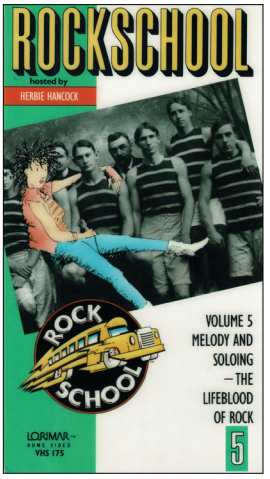

Be true to your school
There's one school they make you go to...now there's a school you'll want to go to.
"Rockschool."
A TV series where real rock stars show you how they make their music.
With guest stars Chet Atkins, Bootsy Collins, Sly Dunbar, Bernard Edwards, John Entwistle, Larry Graham, Gary Moore, Ian Paice (Deep Purple), Carl Palmer, Nile Rodgers, Robbie Shakespeare, John Taylor (Duran Duran) and more.
And special appearances by Stanley Clarke, Jimi Hendrix, Iron Maiden, B.B. King, Motorhead and The Police.
Hosted by Herbie Hancock
ROCK SCHOOL

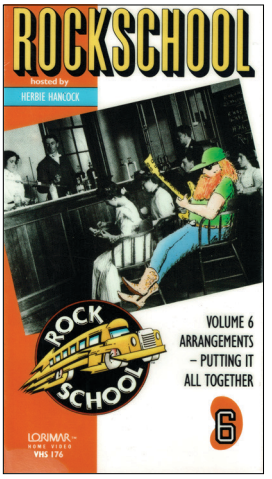












Logo, poster, VHS boxes designed by Tom Corey & Scott Nash
Illustrations by Scott Nash
Corey & Co. Boston for Fred/Alan

Not all of the branding work Fred/Alan did was famous, but we weren't any less proud of it. The 1988 assignment to redesign **The Movie Channel** was one of those.

Our clients at Showtime were now running the channel after acquiring it from MTV Networks. It began as a wannabe competitor to HBO and Showtime, but never quite made it to the promised land.

Now, they wanted some of that Fred/Alan logo magic.

Creative director Noel Frankel provide the black arts this time. It's hard to remember whether he told our clients that "The Eyes Have It," the title to a 1920s movie, or Shakespeare's "Eyes are the windows to the soul." But whatever, they were intrigued by the notion of the mesmerizing visuals of a different set of eyes in every network identification.

Our friends at Charlex had by then done several years of great productions for us at Nickelodeon, Myers's Rum, and HA!, and we worked well with their emotional approach to video. Almost unique among "motion graphics" and visual effects companies, co-founder Alex Weil understood it wasn't all about floating type. He instantly groked it. He brought all the eyes alive, as it were, and found visually clever and kinetic executions to what to many might have been dull repetitions of a wink and a nod.

.....

Logo design by Noel Frankel
Video animation by Charlex, New York

THE MOVIE CHANNEL

May 1, 1988

HOLLYWOOD

THE MOVIE
CHANNEL™

HOLLYWOOD
HOLLYWOOD
CHA

CHANNEL™

MOVIE
HOLLYWOOD
HOLLYWOOD

CHA

THE MOVIE
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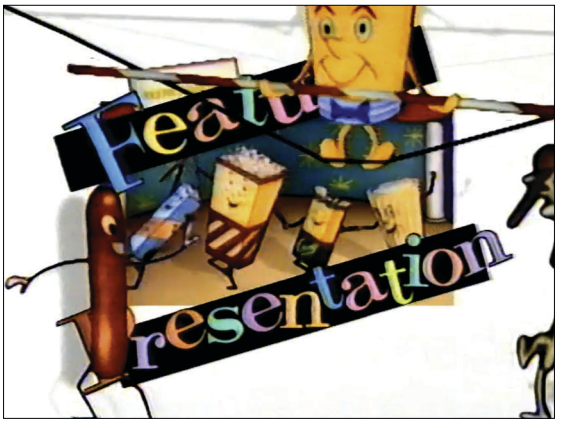
JOE BOB
BRIGGS


Featu
resentation

JOE BOB
BRIGGS
theater

Feature
Presentation

THE MOVIE
CHANNEL

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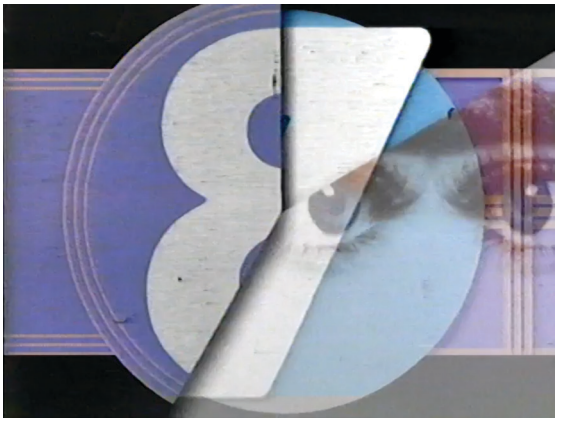
THE M
UNIVERSAL
LEADER



THE M
CHANNEL

THE MOVIE
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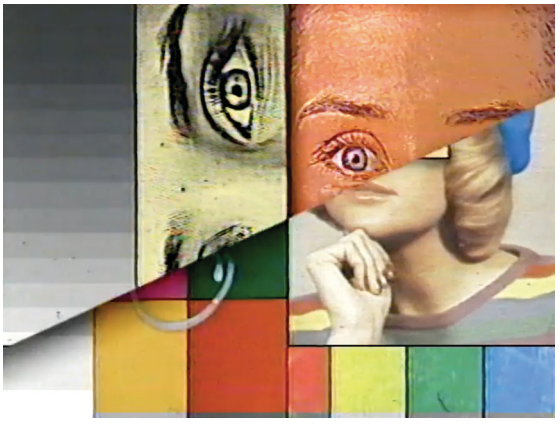

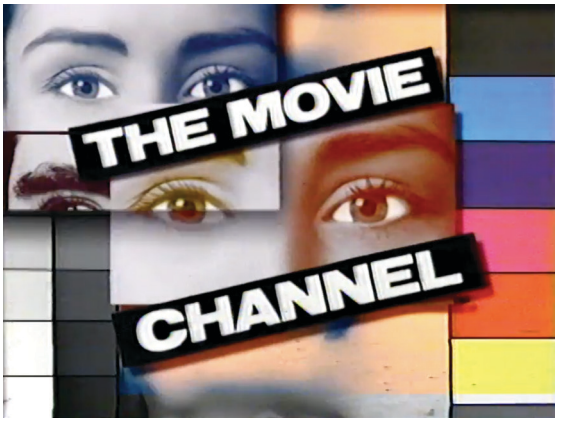
THE MOVIE
CHANNEL

FEAT
5

PICTURE
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4

THE MURE
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TE
3

FEATURE
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2

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PRESENTATION

HAPPY!
Grand Cast
HAPPY!

HORROR
OF
HORROR
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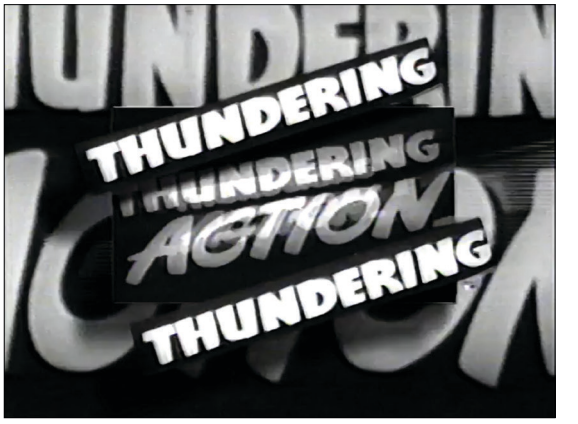
THUNDERING
THUNDERING
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For the Thrills
For the Thrills

THE MOVIE
CHANNEL

sensational
sensational
sensational

Newest
Newest
Newest

BEWITCHING
BEWITCHING
BEWITCHING

EXPLODES
Thrilling Action
EXPLODES

SHATTERING
SHOCK
SHATTERING
SHATTERING

WONDERS
WONDERS
and Dangers
WONDERS

Romance
Romance
Romance

THE MOVIE
CHANNEL

TOP
ATTRACTION

CHARLEX

1987

The last thing we ever imagined was that one of our great creative partners would become a client. That's what happened when we went over to 45th Street in Manhattan for a meeting with Charlex founders and principals Charlie Levi and Alex Weil.

Charlex started as an animatic vendor for advertising agencies. Animatics –storyboard frames with soundtrack– helped clients visualize what their commercials would actually looks like. Charlie and Alex built a wildly innovative company using cutting-edge video technology, making their animatics best in class. One client, National Enquirer, even used a gussied-up animatic as actual commercials.

They gained fame in 1984 when their Cars music video (directed with Jeff Stein) won MTV's first Video Music Award. Later, Lorne Michaels hired them to create a dazzling opening for his SNL return.

We'd always had a good thing with Charlie and Alex. We were the same ages and Charlie cemented our cultural lock in our first meeting when he made a crack about the Flintstones. The first project we worked on together was Nickelodeon network identications *(pages 150-151)* and from there they came up with wildly creative solutions for Myers's Rum, VH1, HA!, and the Movie Channel. Most of production partners were small indies, Charlex traveled in the big leagues of ad agencies, but with Fred/Alan's projects they could let their freak flags fly. And boy, did they ever.

It was no surprise they wanted to advertise themselves in the trades, but it still shocked us they wanted Fred/Alan to lead the way. It cemented our relationship forever when they wanted us to show that freak flag in public.

Arlen Schumer had designed and illustrated a fabulous billboard campaign for WYNY-FM, New York for Fred/Alan, and Alan thought he'd be perfect for the notion of a series of newspaper articles of Charlex style absurdity, with a completely straight ad in the money spot in the middle of the page. Absurdity? David Burd, a comedian, animator, writer and producer we'd worked with as far back as MTV completely fit the bill.

How many ads did we produce? Dozens? Hundreds? We lost count over the years, but we never lost our love for Charlie, Alex and Charlex.

Apologia: We're sorry, but we have no apologia for the absense of Charlie "Hambone" Levi's pictorial feature, "Lunch Buckets on Parade."

.....

Writers: Alan Goodman & David Burd
Art direction & illustration: Arlen Schumer
Account management: Jessica Wolf
Creative directors: Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert

The TWILIGHT ZONE

Charlex Adds A New Dimension To Home Video

You're travelling through another dimension, a dimension not only of sight and sound but of mind; a journey into a wondrous land whose boundaries are that of imagination – Next stop, the Twilight Zone!" Of course it is – what were you expecting, Penn Station? Rod Serling's opening to the Twilight Zone is one of the best loved, and most quoted in TV history (Mr. Ed not withstanding). But how do you take that memorable intro and make it new for a new medium? That's the problem Harry Elias of CBS Video Library faced when he needed a new title sequence for their home video collection of classic TZ episodes. He brought the problem to Charlex.

Back To The Original

Charlex Producer Chris Harvey went back to the original episodes, screening hours and hours of T-Zones to find those certain images, those haunting, distinctively Serling, unforgettably eerie images that made the show great.

Background Material

Alex Weil and Chris designed, or rather *synthesized* a barren landscape strewn with broken bits of wood, rocks, and other ominous elements, by capturing and reworking frames of video from the old shows. Paintbox/Harry Artist John Semerad took these scenes, cut out the choice moments and fitted the original figures to their new backgrounds. With these scenes, ace Editor Bill Weber combined carefully chosen footage and switcher effects for that desirable dreamlike quality. The composite scenes were edited to a dynamic audio track created at Photomag with engineer Rex Recker.

The Twilight People

All your favorites are there, appearing and disappearing on an unearthly black and white TV wasteland, lost for eternity in the Twilight Zone and found for new generations at Charlex. It's ominous, mysterious, and yet surprising and fun. A loving tribute to the Twilight Zone crafted by the dedicated weirdos at Charlex.

Manifest Destiny

Charlex is taking over the world! Or at least the eighth floor at 2 West 45. Two additional office suites have been added to their territory. Stop in for the 50¢ tour.

IT'S DEFINITE: "EARTH WILL BE DUST IN 6 WEEKS!" – SCIENTIST PANEL

Can it be? A whole year has passed since we began bringing you dear readers this collection of tasty tidbits known only as "Cut & Paste!?" It seems like only yesterday we were searching our files for the unimportant, the inconsequential, and the trivial, to put together our first column. Happy Anniversary to all of us!

Curses, Foliage Again!

It's fall . . . the time of year when people get in their cars and drive around looking at trees. Pardon us for saying it, but there are much more constructive ways to spend your autumn leave time. Why not take a peep at the Charlex sample reels?

Six great reels featuring some of this season's most colorful animatics, film effects, full productions, graphics, show openings and retouching. And if it's a particularly beautiful day, simply open the window while you watch!

The Heat Is On

When Ellen Olbrys opened her home gas and electric bill a couple of months ago, she was surprised to see a balance due of $7,541.83. Sounds high to us, too. Math whizzes may figure that keeping the apartment at 96° F would not add up to that exorbitant amount. Even heating only with the toaster . . .

Categories

There are three categories of restaurants. Restaurants that care, and do a great job. Restaurants that care, but don't have a clue. And restaurants that don't care. We figure that your chances of walking into a random restaurant and getting a great meal are one in three . . . probably the same odds as walking into a random video house and getting a great commercial. Better stick with Charlex!

All Purpose Word

There aren't many words that you can use at any occasion but one of our favorites has to be *halcyon*. It can mean practically anything. Our dictionary defines it as meaning "calm, peaceful, tranquil" and as "wealthy, prosperous" as well as "a mythical bird usually identified with the kingfisher." The only other word with so many diverse meanings is "Charlex", defined as *the* place for "animatics" and "great film effects on video" as well as "best breakfast in town." Ah, Charlex! It reminds me of those halcyon (tranquil) days of long ago when I was halcyon (wealthy) and the halcyons (birds) were nesting.

Wet Kiss

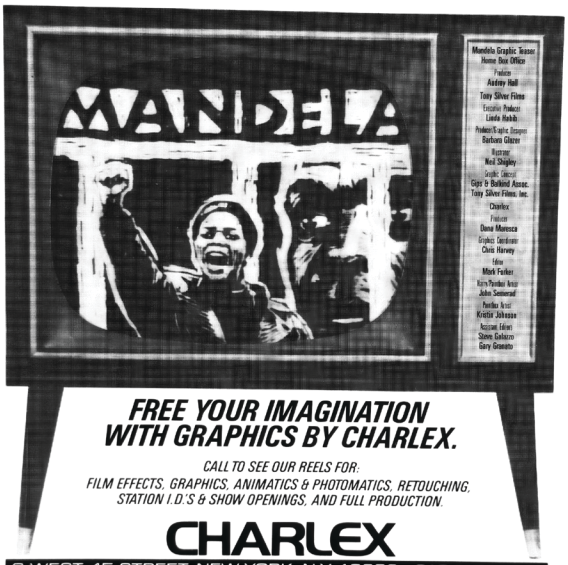
Smilin' Gina Carillo, Charlex's favorite aqua enthusiast, recently returned from a Florida trip with some charming vacation photos. The snaps show the photogenic Ms. receiving a scandalous smooch from a kisser other than her husband's. The lips belong to a beluga whale she met at Sea World. When asked if former Charlexer and current hubby Mike Kanfer was jealous, she replied, "No, he had a whale of a time with the dolphins." Want proof? Gina has the pix!

And thanks to all of you who were so kind as to send cards and letters of congratulations. For those who *don't* know the address, it's: Cut & Paste, c/o Charlex, 2 West 45 St., NYC 10036.

DOC

APOLOGIA

We're sorry, but we have no apologia for the absence of Charlie "Hambone" Levi's pictorial feature, "Lunchbuckets on Parade."



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CHARLEX

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COMINGS & GOINGS

A while back we mentioned we were doing a Doritos crunch test for Tracy-Locke in Dallas. The test was successful! **David Moore** and **Gae Benson** returned along with **Barry Stilwell** and **Jonathan Mack** from Dennis Hayes after shooting the spot on film with **Michael Moir** of Michael Moir Productions. We're adding zesty special effects, so that the film breaks between the scenes, just like a crunchy Doritos chip. The flavor is quite international: the spot will air in Brazil, Australia, Spain, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Japan . . .

Our doors also opened for **Sally Hotchkiss, Dom Ferrell** and **Tom Pogany** of Ingalls, Quinn & Johnson in Boston . . . **Sandy Mason, Chuck Anderson** and **Harry Ralston** from BJK&E . . . Lowe Marschalk's **Susan Macy** and **Susan Diliallo** . . . and **Suzanne Eastham, Al Amato, Nick Pisacane,** and **Michael Amato** of Kullberg Amato Pisacane/ABP Inc.

Additional Paintbox Artists – so the list continues here: **Gordon DeWolf, Kristin Johnson, Sam Mandrogona;** . . . and remember be careful out there.

"Vertical hold is a state of being, but heaven is a state of mind."

"There are more things on heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

"Some people go from dollars to donuts, but I'll take pennies from heaven."

"Does history repeat itself in heaven too?"

"Oh human love, thou spirits given on earth of all we hope in heaven."

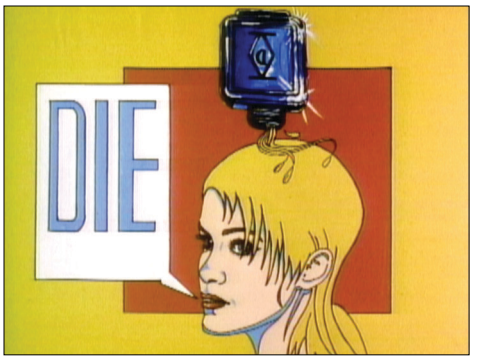
"Old TV shows *don't die*, they go to *heaven*."

TV HEAVEN

1988-1989

Channel 41
St. Cloud, Minnesota

OLD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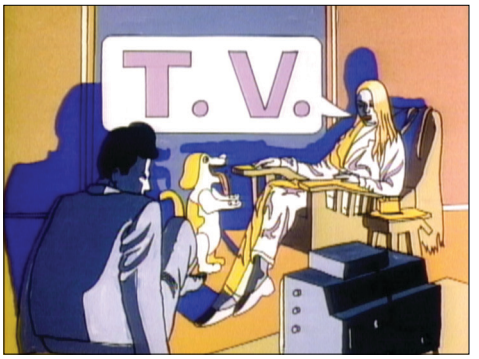
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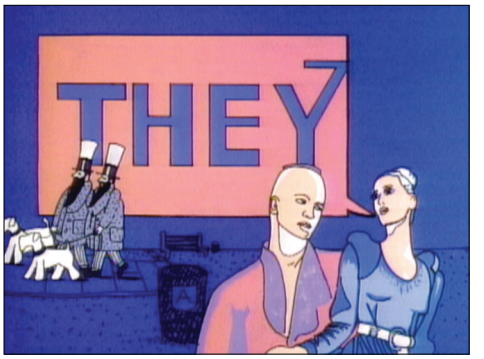
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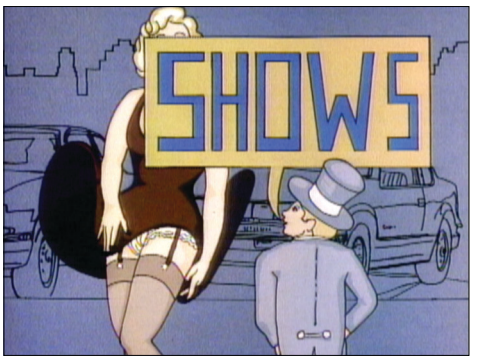
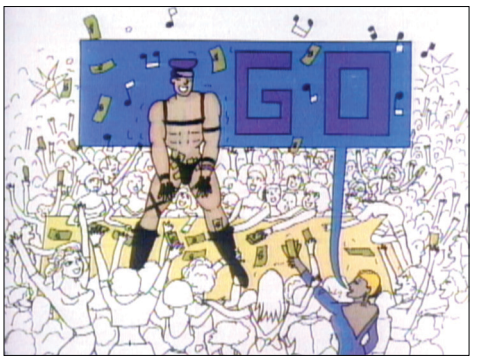

SHOWS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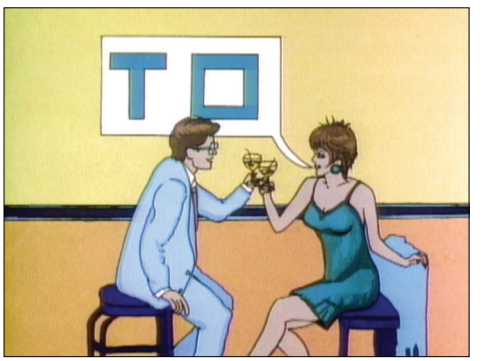

TO

HEAVEN

TV HEAVEN
41
SM
KXLI 41–ST. CLOUD, MN. KXLT 47–ROCHESTER, MN.

The sales team at Nick-at-Nite couldn't figure out how to sell ads for oldies, so in their infinite wisdom, they decreed the channel should be positioned as "comedy."

At the same time, Fred/Alan was approached by a tiny UHF station, 65 miles north of Minneapolis. We figured that 1) they were UHF, local TV, not cable and 2) NAN no longer wanted what we had given them.

And just like that we renamed Channel 42, KXLI as "TV HEAVEN." That is, we brought oldies television to Minnesota.

Fred/Alan producer Tom Pomposello turned us on to pop artist/filmmaker Fred Mogubgub who had a simple, distinctive style that was eye-catching and relatively inexpensive. We commissioned some IDs from Fred, got some of our other favorites to use a similar approach using their own art styles.

Illustration & animation by Fred Mogubgub NY

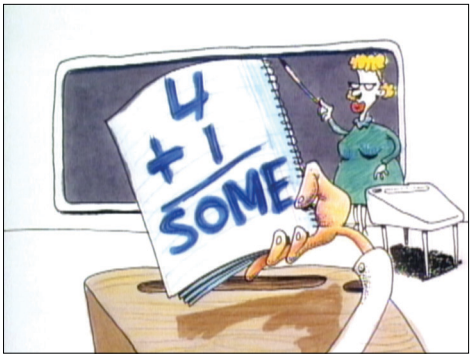
Soundtracks sung by Mac Rebennack, aka Dr. John

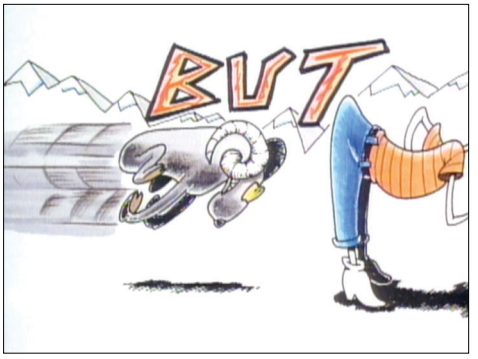
The station leapt to the top of local ratings and got more national press in a month than NAN got in two years.

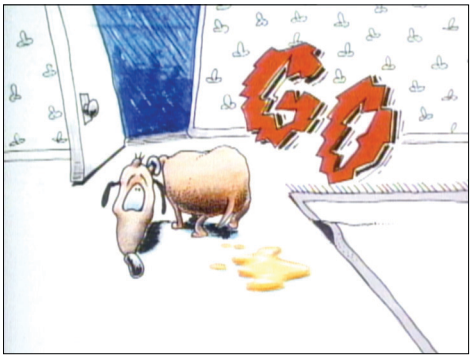
Nick-at-Nite was embarrassed and threatened to fire us. We folded.

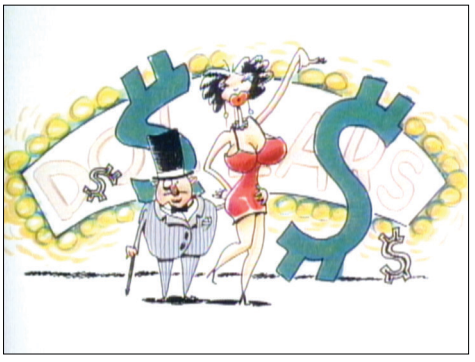
Good night, TV Heaven.

TV HEAVEN
SM
KXLI 41-ST. CLOUD, MN. KXLT 47-ROCHESTER, MN.









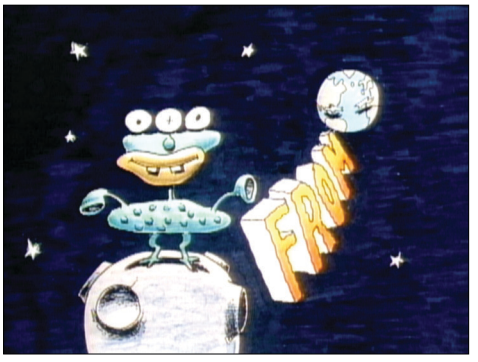
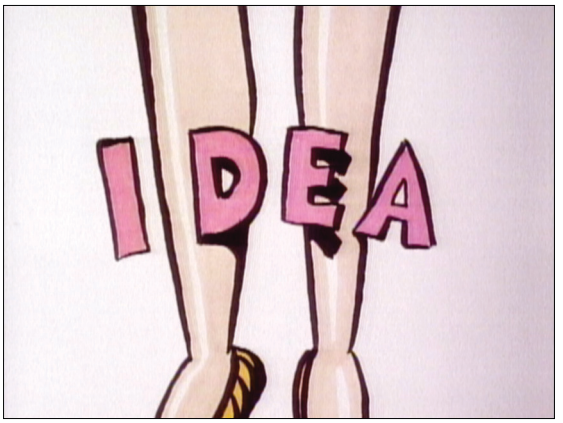


Illustration
& animation by
Marv Newland
International
Rocketship
Vancouver BC

MY!

HEAVEN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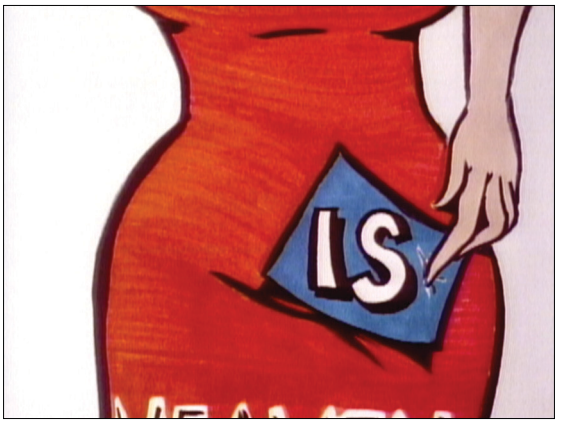
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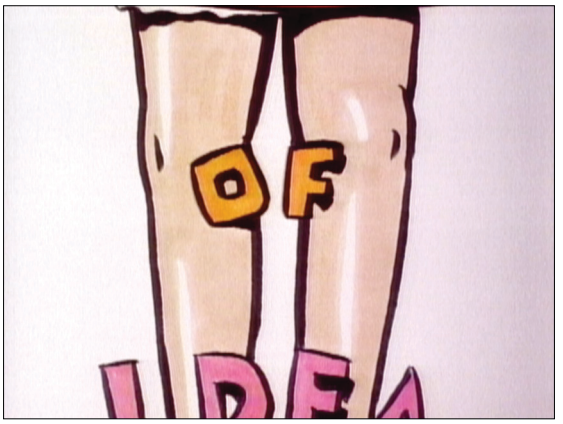
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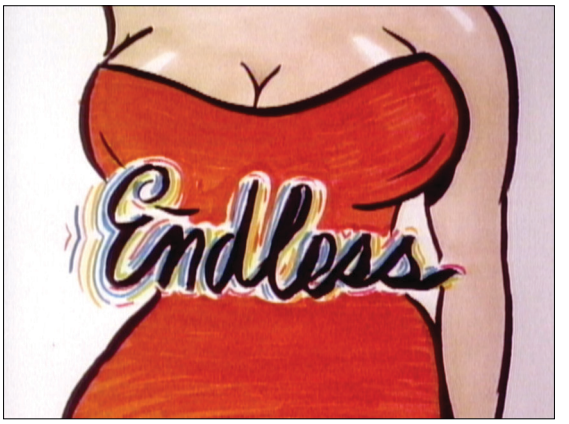

Endless

Illustration & animation by Marv Newland International Rocketship Vancouver BC

Soundtracks sung by Mac Rebennack, aka Dr. John

We made television

not rock concerts.

Well, no one at our shop had ever produced any rock concerts. Except Elliot Krowe. Which led into the most unusual project in Fred/Alan's history.

Elliot, a college radio buddy of ours, was on our team. He'd spent his early days (and his post-Fred/Alan career) running the lighting operations of dozens of giant concerts, having started with 70s stalwarts Blue Öyster Cult.

Elliot Krowe in the documentary interview in Mumbai.

Alan's apartment landlord at the South Street Seaport introduced us to Venkat Vardhan, an Indian acquaintance who wanted to promote the first ever rock concert in India. Venkat knew what he wanted the result to be, but other than that, he didn't even know what he didn't know. There was no band booked, a vague idea of the location, and... well, not much else.

Elliot put the entire thing together. Which, trust us, was not a simple affair. He figured out how to book an appropriate act –Europe, a Swedish hard rock band that had recently had a breakout with their album "The Final Countdown"– along with the complicated logistics between North America, the European continent and the Asian continent. To give you an idea what was necessary, to get the sound and lighting support into a country that had never done the kind of show that the group required, meant flying literal tons of equipment across the frickin' North Pole!

After the reconnaissance trips, when the actual concert was booked –coinciding with the 1988 American Thanksgiving holiday– Alan and his girlfriend, and a Chauncey Street documentary crew*, tagged along. Here are some of Elliot's and Alan's recollections.

.....

Elliot:

In September or October 1986, Venkat Vardhan contacted Fred/Alan for help organizing an outdoor rock concert in India. Venkat's brother Shreepad, studying in Oklahoma, knew Alan's landlord, who figured our MTV connection might be useful.

In November 1986, I brought Fred/Alan's Mark Tomizawa and a small recon team to visit Bombay (now Mumbai) to scout locations and hold meetings. Over the next 18 months, multiple site surveys were conducted, with communication mainly through telex and phone. The initial plan was to hold the concert at the Cricket Club of India, a downtown stadium ideal for the event. Pride India, a charity for housing and healthcare, sponsored the concert, making government approvals easier to secure.

EUROPE IN INDIA

NOVEMBER 28, 1988

Produced by Elliot Krowe

Negotiating for artists was challenging. India had no prior concerts of this scale, and promoters had a poor reputation for production value and payment issues. After numerous possibilities, confirmations, and cancellations, the band Europe headlined, with Nazareth as the second act and local band Rock Machine as the opener.

Originally scheduled for October 1988, the show was delayed to November 26 due to issues with Reserve Bank permissions. Scheduling conflicts forced a venue change to a "new" soccer stadium on Bombay's outskirts. Once all funds were transferred and production equipment flown in, our team arrived two weeks early.

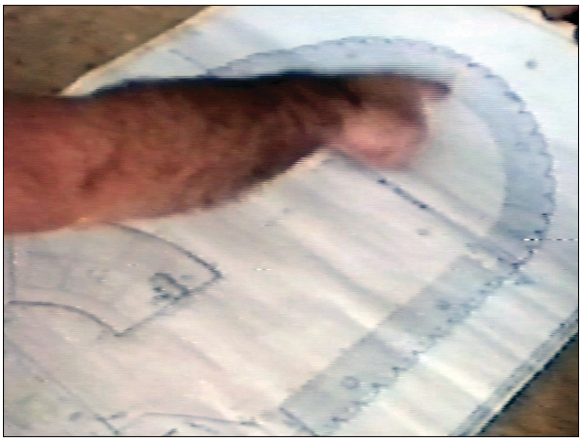
Wait! What? The venue was disastrous. The stadium was 75% built and abandoned. Grass had been burned down days before, homeless families occupied dressing rooms, and utilities were off. In two frantic weeks, we cleaned the site, turned on water and electricity, and built a bamboo stage, fencing, and barricades.

Coordinating utilities, law enforcement, and concert infrastructure was exhausting with inexperienced local staff. The event was also a crash course in modern concert production and security for everyone involved.

Alan:
My memories of our Fred/Alan trip to bring rock and roll to what is now Mumbai are mostly personal. My presence was largely ceremonial and my duties minimal — to shake hands at a welcoming meeting, and to watch the concert at

Europe plays the first rock concert in India, November 29, 1988
(opposite page: Producer Elliot Krowe and promoter Venkat Vardhan
plot and plan the entire event.

the rustic, unfinished stadium. I remember it was already evening on the day we arrived when we got the idea to go see the field where the concert would be staged. We arrived after dark, and since there were no lights, we saw only an endless expanse of blackness. Somewhere in the distance was the sound of a loud motor. We couldn't see what it was. As the sound got closer, a tiny red dot became visible. It seemed to just hover in the sky. It wasn't until it was quite close that we could see it was the glowing end of a cigarette, in the mouth of a man mowing the field in total darkness in the middle of the night.



Our friends at MTV had tossed some money in the till to shoot a promo spot with Europe's lead singer, so I wrote something and we shot it days later before the concert. All I remember was that he was at a payphone. I don't think it was very good. I don't think it ever aired.

I was often startled as we traveled through the city to see no signs of the culture we knew outside of India. Very distant places in the world still have Coca Cola and Levis Jeans. Not what was then Bombay. At least, not on billboards or ads at the newspaper stands. Another sign that to be doing what we were doing with a rock band that had global recognition was extremely noteworthy.

Without familiar touchstones, we immersed ourselves in the Indian way of life. With a few days off between our project kick-off and the concert, my girlfriend and I had time to explore Jaipur and Udaipur, cities in the Rajasthan with ancient roots. We had made flight and hotel reservations back in the U.S. and everything was set, but we were completely unable to book a flight back from Udaipur to arrive before the concert. We wrote it off as something we'd solve when we were on the ground.

The flight to Jaipur was hours and hours delayed, and we arrived sometime after 2:00 A.M. A row of taxis were waiting. We snagged one, and our very cheerful driver started on his way. We had heard our trip coincided with the annual Puskar camel fair, and we asked him the best way to the event. He told us it was two-and-a-half hours away, and the best way to get there was for him to drive us. We told him we wanted to see the city first, and he suggested that the best way to do that would be for him to drive us. It seemed that whatever we wanted to do, the best way to do it was for him to drive us.

The next morning, despite the late check-in, we were down early for breakfast at our hotel, a former palace. We looked across the lawn and there was our driver standing proudly by the car. When we had eaten, he brought us on his personal tour of the city, including

stops at some particularly special jewelry and fabric merchants. I'm rather certain one of the ways they were special was that they maintained a special relationship with our driver.

When we had had our fill of touring, we started on the road to Pushkar. It was a startlingly desolate route. Mostly what we saw was barren earth. Occasionally we would pass a man with his camel. I remember only one establishment where we stopped to eat, and possibly for fuel. I remember our driver wanted no food.

The camel fair was a feast for the eyes. An annual event, it draws thousands who trade livestock, sell their colorful rugs and other goods, and participate in sporting events. What we didn't fully understand was that it is also an important pilgrimage site, and that the fair marked the week when religious rituals are observed. Everywhere we looked we saw something new and extraordinary, and when we had seen enough, we found our driver, standing by his car and smiling at us. It was another two-and-a-half hour excursion back, of course. He was cheerful the entire way.

We had an early flight out to Udaipur. Guess what the best way was to the airport?

The following morning at the airport we paid our driver, tipping him enormously. The entire bill including tip was $60. Funny what you remember.

Our trip to Udaipur was even more eye-popping. The Lake Palace Hotel was built in 1743 as a summer palace for the Maharana and is cleverly designed to appear as though it rises straight out of the water in the middle of Lake Pichola. It's easy to describe what you see as you approach by boat, but almost impossible to describe the effect. It is a stunning monument to wealth and opulence. We booked an incredible suite that may have been 4000 square feet. It was on multiple levels. It had wrap-around terraces that seemed the size of basketball courts. The bedroom featured a cloistered bed nook with a ceiling just a few inches above our heads, utterly festooned with erotic paintings. We had definitely gotten on a plane and gone somewhere.

But there was still the pesky issue of getting back. We learned that flights were scarce because of the pilgrimages. This was peak travel season in India. Even our attentive hotel clerk had been unable to secure flight reservations, and recommended getting on the boat and going to the airline office in town where we might have more success.

The airline office was little more than a single room on an upper floor in an office building. We went inside and saw a long line that snaked around and around until it reached a single man at a small desk, an open ledger in front of him and a pencil in his hand. It took quite a while to pull up at the desk but by now we were used to long lines everywhere in India. We told him what we wanted, and he wrote our names and ages in pencil into his ledger. I've never understood why they needed our ages. When he was done, he smiled up at us. "Okay," he said. "You are on the waiting list. Number 43 and 44." It took a moment for the information to sink in. "This plane has 19 seats, correct?" I asked. Yes, he

said. “And we’re number 43 and 44 on the waiting list?” I asked. Yes, he said. ‘So there’s no chance we’re getting on this flight, is there?” “No,” he answered, smiling, “no chance.”

Back at the hotel, our sympathetic clerk told us the only option was the train from Ahmedabad to Bombay. Ahmedabad was close to four-and-a-half hours away.
We were on the road early the next day,

and at the station spent hours and hours trying to get train tickets. We went from counter to counter. Our names went on list after list. My girlfriend was still suffering from some food poisoning contracted earlier in the week and was not looking well. Finally, the only nice man in the station said to me, “Tell me... are you a Christian man?” I wasn’t sure what the right answer was, so I tentatively answered “Y-y-y-es?” He had spotted the manager of the station and walked us across the floor to meet him. I’m not sure what the clerk told him, but the man whipped out a pencil and without a word signed a form. Suddenly there were train tickets for the all-night train back to Bombay.

We hadn’t eaten. Nothing at the stalls

looked particularly safe. That same nice clerk told us we could buy a meal at the employee cafeteria, so we found that room and ordered. Mine was the curried cauliflower. I remember it because at some point while we were eating, it dawned on me that it was Thanksgiving back home. This was one of the most appreciated Thanksgiving feasts of my life.

23 years later, I was at Housing Works Bookstore for our twice a year street fair [Alan volunteers there weekly] and this kid Keith –a financial analyst– was there through the morning moving stuff out to the street. He finished up and asked me if we had show tunes that hadn't come out yet. So I brought him to the sub basement where we always have plenty of show tunes.

He was in heaven, grabbing West Side Story and Evita and everything else – maybe 25 albums. Sketches of Spain and some other jazz. He was telling me about listening to music with his father, who traveled a lot and brought home albums.

I asked where he was from in India, and he said Bombay. I told him I was there when we produced the first rock concert in Bombay. He asked, "Which one?" "Europe," I told him. "oh my god," he tells me. "I was there!!!". He was in seventh grade. He was crying, he told me, because it was the first time in his life his very strict mother let him do anything.

There's 1.2 billion people in India. I met one we touched.

...

Elliot:

On November 28, 1988, the concert went surprisingly well. Of course, there were last-minute fixes, but 45,000 attendees enjoyed a great music presentation in a safe, entertaining environment.

**Documentary footage was shot with a team led by cinematogapher John Hazard, some rough edits made, but never finished. The photos here are some funky screenshots from the original VHS tape dubs. The raw footsge was posted on YouTube in 2024. There's a new comment posted on the videos at least every week. 35 years later!*

SASSY

MAGAZINE

1990-1991

Sassy Magazine certainly wasn't aimed at us 30-somethings. An Australian brand import, editor Jane Pratt exploded what a teen girl magazine could be. No more Seventeen headlines like "Tips for KISS-ABLE Lips" and "Make your CRUSH come true."

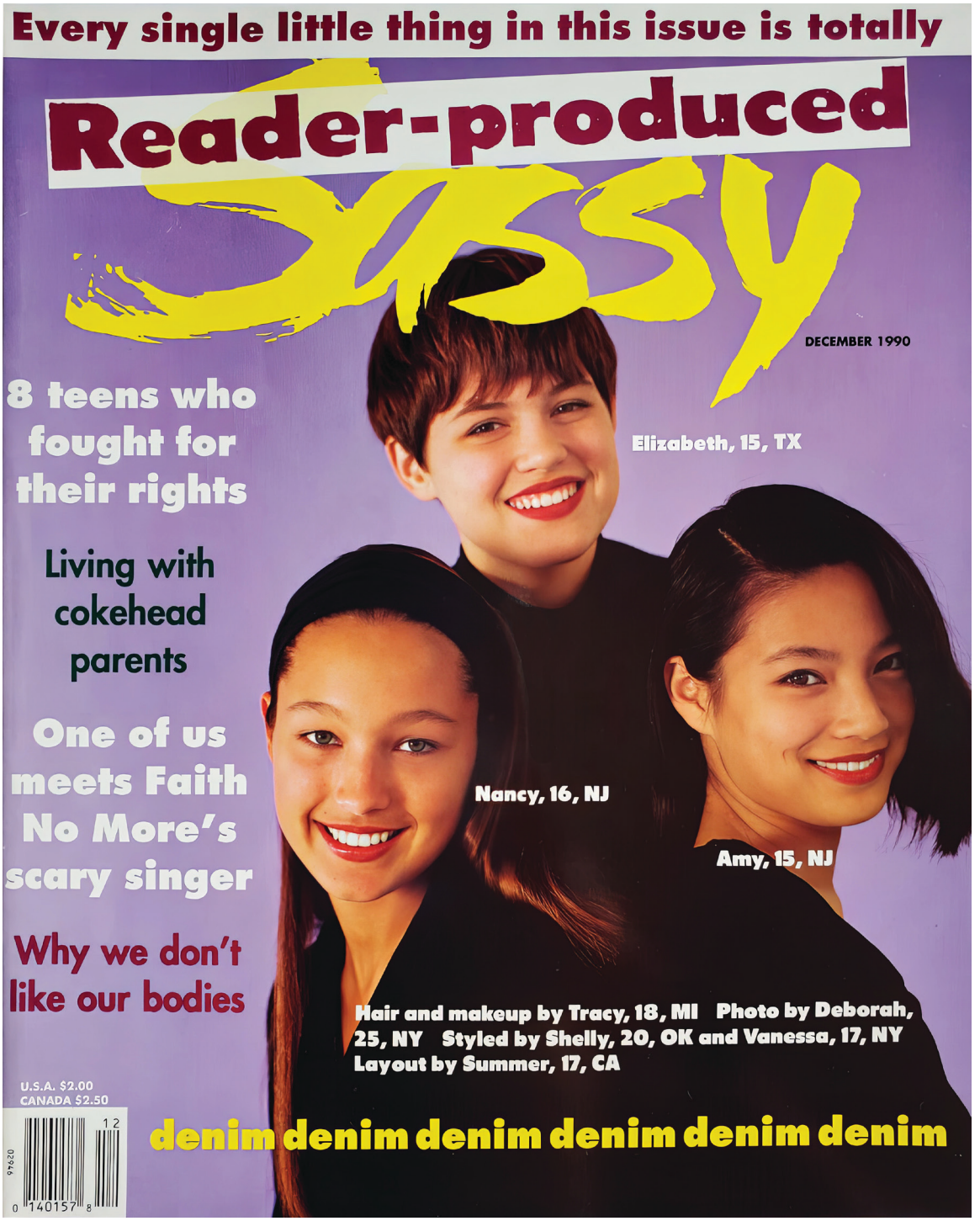
No way. Sassy asked "Do you need armpit hair to be a feminist? The Sassy Debate." Not to mention"Take Our Sex Survey, Please" and "Understanding the daddy love-hate vibe." Or "8 teens who fought for their rights."

But it wasn't just the headlines. The articles broke the fourth wall, allowing readers to get to know Jane and all her writers and photographers. It wasn't the biggest magazine, but Sassy was certainly one of the most special.

Our TV Heaven client was actually a magazine publisher. He bought Sassy and asked Fred/Alan to get involved.

The most lasting thing we did was when we found out the office received 400,000 letters from readers. That's with a magazine with a circulation of 400,000! And when we read the stuff it might have been written by the professional staff at Sassy.

So we suggested what became an annual feature. How about having those super smart readers take over from the editors and writers? No surprise, it was a great success that was repeated year after year.


Every single little thing in this issue is totally
Reader-produced
Sassy
DECEMBER 1990
8 teens who fought for their rights
Living with cokehead parents
One of us meets Faith No More's scary singer
Why we don't like our bodies
Elizabeth, 15, TX
Nancy, 16, NJ
Amy, 15, NJ
Hair and makeup by Tracy, 18, MI Photo by Deborah, 25, NY Styled by Shelly, 20, OK and Vanessa, 17, NY Layout by Summer, 17, CA
U.S.A. $2.00
CANADA $2.50
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02946
denim denim denim denim denim denim

The little engine that could. New Orleans based Barq's Root Beer was determined to sell itself. And their strategy was to create "breakthrough" advertising that would get the attention of the press and the major soft drink companies. Fred/Alan's "unconventional" reputation made us the perfect fit.

"We needed to make [Barq's] a phenomenon, like MTV," said it all, in the words of their advertising guy.

Fred/Alan delivered on a number of fronts, not the least in our media selection. Wild "snipes" –posters on construction sites, like concert promoters would do– and cable exclusive ad buys, still an unusual strategy in those early years. We made a few spots with our friends, the Poster Boys comedy troupe. Barq's loved the work.

So they fired us, as they did for four subsequent boutique agencies over the next four years. "Chew 'em up and spit 'em out," as a record executive was once quoted. It worked for them.

"In 1995, The Coca-Cola Company purchased Barq's, making history with the company's first purchase of a carbonated beverage in the U.S."

But, the real story for Fred/Alan was embedded in the New York Times advertising column about the Barq's snipe campaign.

Starting in 1988, when we took on the trappings of a "full service" ad agency –an art department, media planning, account executives, the works– we were determined to book accounts outside of media. Like Barq's.

"Fred/Alan, the unconventional New York agency that has **made a name for itself** creating advertising that MTV-generation consumers think is awesome."

"'We have to prove that our style of talking to young consumers will work for a lot of clients, not just ones in the entertainment business.'"

"It was the work for MTV that established Fred/ Alan as a "hip" agency that everyone in the industry watched closely and **sometimes imitated**."

"'Everyone thinks the agency is going to be filled with people bouncing off the walls.' [the Barq's exec] said. 'But **only the advertising is off the wall**.'"

"**But 10 years from now**, when the principals are well into middle age, and if, as planned, the agency has increased its $30 million in billings significantly, that may be a far more difficult trick to pull off."

"Mr. Goodman said, 'But the **one thing we're never going to do** is become one of those agencies that makes it living taking its clients on fishing trips.'"

Alan had it righter than right.

Two years later, Fred/Alan folded its tent. We had better things to do than to go fishing.

BARQ'S
ROOT BEER 1990

THE NEW YORK TIMES, MONDAY, JULY 16, 1990

THE MEDIA BUSINESS

Advertising | Kim Foltz

Fred/Alan Takes to The Streets

AT first glance, the new campaign for Barq's soft drinks is nothing out of the ordinary, with shots of soda cans under the headline, "So try'em already."

It is not the contents of the ads but their locations that make them unusual: they are plastered on the temporary wooden walls around New York City construction sites—next to posters for rock bands like "Ice-T. Banned in 10 States" and movies like "Frankenhooker."

It is all part of the philosophy of Fred/Alan, the unconventional New York agency that has made a name for itself creating advertising that MTV-generation consumers think is awesome. Accordingly, if Barq's could not outspend Coke and Pepsi, it could at least be more outrageous.

•

"The only way we were going to get kids to notice us was to make our ads streetwise," said Fred Seibert, who founded the agency in 1983 with Alan Goodman. "We had to put the ads in an unexpected place so kids wouldn't think of this as advertising."

That is what the advertiser also wanted. "We needed to make the product a phenomenon, like MTV," said Rick Hill, the vice president of advertising for Barq's Inc., which gave Fred/Alan its estimated $2 million national account earlier this year. In addition to the posters in New York, the campaign also features television commercials.

Barq's, a regional soda based in New Orleans that is expanding nationally, is an important breakthrough for Fred/Alan, which needed to establish itself in the consumer products field if it was to grow significantly.

"It was a critical win," Mr. Goodman said. "We have to prove that our style of talking to young consumers will work for a lot of clients, not just ones in the entertainment business."

•

The agency's founders, who met while working for the student radio station at Columbia University, began creating advertising as the in-house agency for MTV in 1981. They struck out on their own in 1983, and their client roster has been dominated by entertainment accounts like MTV and its sister networks, VH-1, Nickelodeon and Ha!, the comedy channel.

It was the work for MTV that established Fred/Alan as a "hip" agency that everyone in the industry watched closely and sometimes imitated. One of their first campaigns was a series of ultra-fastpaced commercials for MTV that set a new stylistic standard in advertising.

In addition, the promotional ads they created for MTV using a clay-animated version of the channel's logotype helped revive the animation technique in the United States; the well-known "dancing raisins" spots were the most popular copycat.

•

More recently, the agency produced a group of frenetic, animated commercials for VH-1 featuring Fester Bestertester, a red-haired, bubble-nosed and duckfooted character created by Don Martin the cartoonist known for his work for Mad magazine.

Fred/Alan executives said the agency's irreverent "I want my MTV" image created a false impression— Fred/Alan is really more buttoned-down than Day-Glo spandex in its approach to the business. The agency, for example, carefully researches every strategy and believes in the wisdom of testing ads; the principals even wear suits and ties.

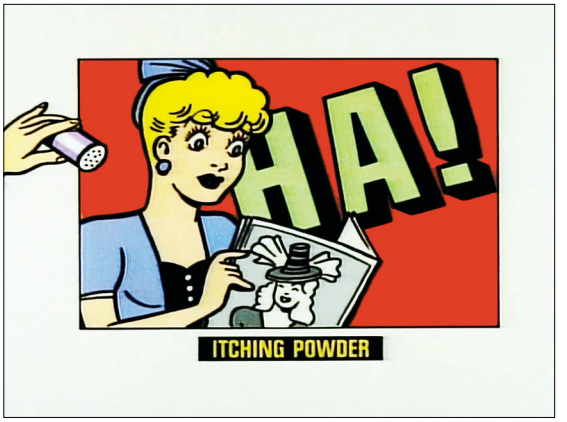
"Everyone thinks the agency is going to be filled with people bouncing off the walls," Mr. Hill said. "But only the advertising is off the wall."

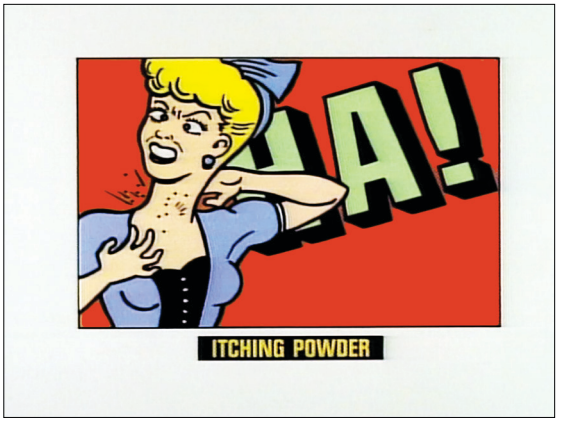
•

Fred/Alan bills itself as the only agency specializing in advertising to the under-35 market, never mind that Mr. Seibert and Mr. Goodman are pushing 40.

"You don't have to be young to stay in touch with the youth market," Mr. Seibert said. "The trick is to have a childlike point of view and mix it with maturity. If we raced around actually trying to keep up with young people, we'd be left behind huffing and puffing."

But 10 years from now, when the principals are well into middle age, and if, as planned, the agency has increased its $30 million in billings significantly, that may be a far more difficult trick to pull off. "Growth is certainly going to bring problems," Mr. Goodman said. "The culture of the agency is bound to change, and maybe we won't be able to keep it all perfectly together. But the one thing we're never going to do is become one of those agencies that makes it living taking its clients on fishing trips."



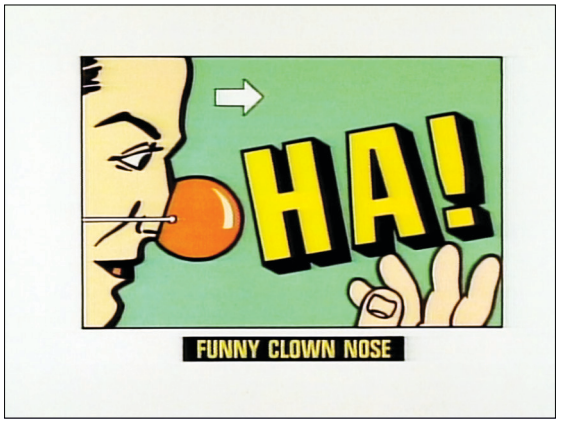


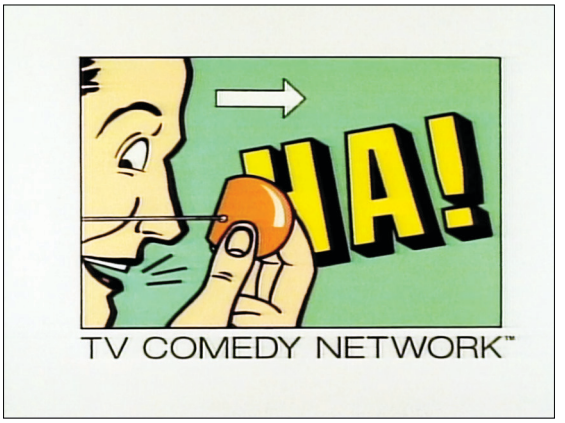
1990-1991

HA!

TV COMEDY NETWORK

HA! logo designed by Noel Frankel, Fred/Alan creative director





Design & illustration by Lou Brooks

Animation by Jerry Lieberman Productions NY

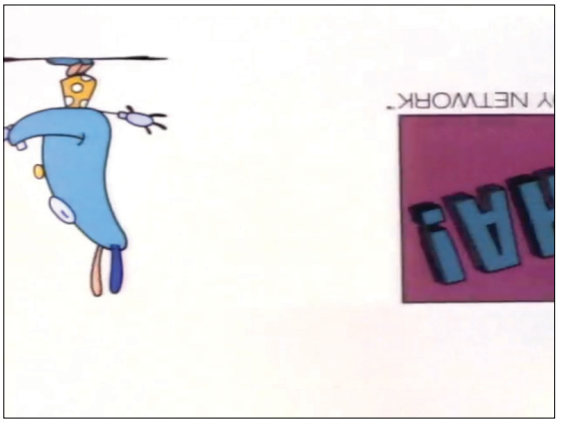
HA! business cards

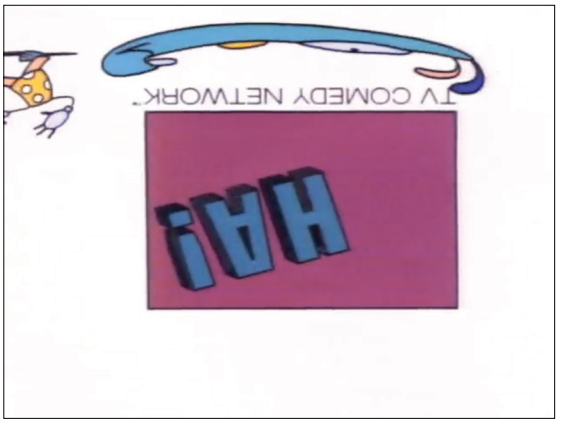
Models:
Top: Jessica Wolf
Bottom: John Sullivan

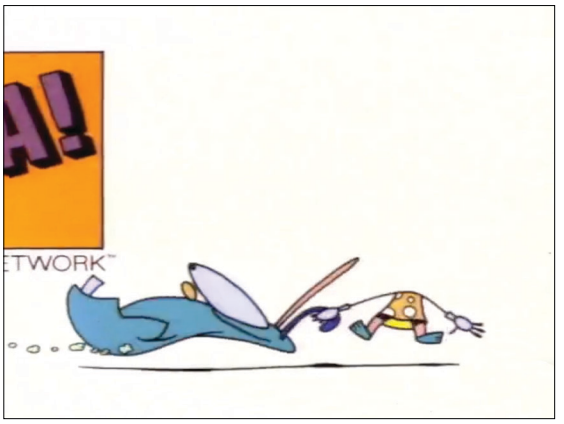
(Next page)
Top: Len Fischman
Bottom: Duck

HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK™

HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK™







Illustrated and animated by Marv Newland, International Rocketship, Vancouver BC

Designed, photographed and produced by Marc Karzen

HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK™

HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK

HA!

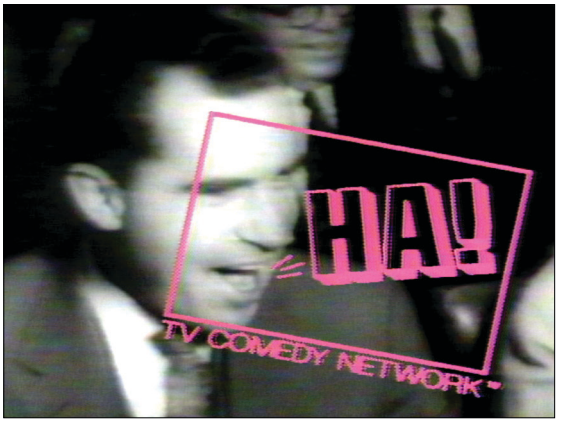
HA!

HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK

HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK

CENSORED
TV COMEDY NETWORK™

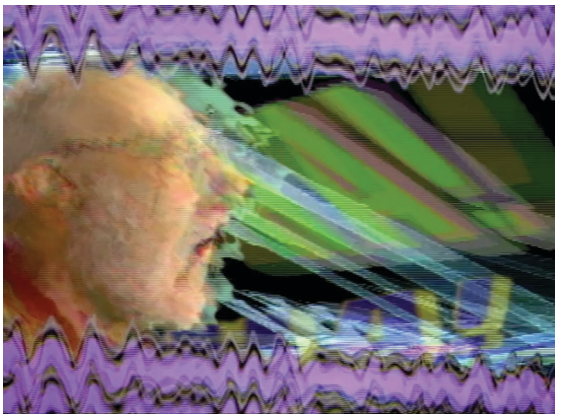
HA!

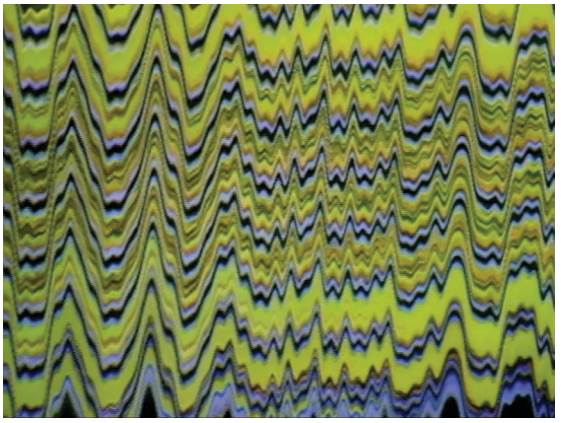


Designed and produced by Charlex New York

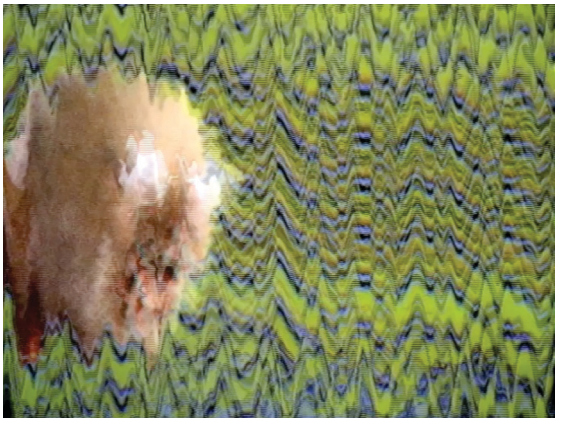
Designed by Drew Takahashi and produced by [Colossal] Pictures, San Francisco

HA!

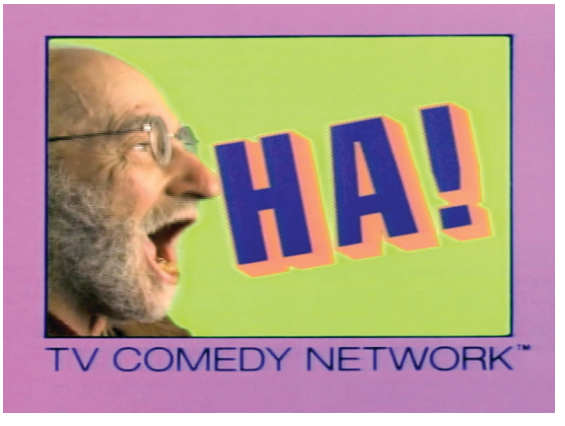

HA!



HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK™



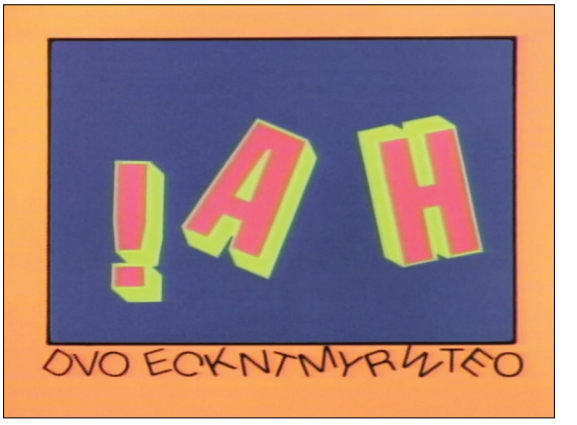
HA!


HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK™

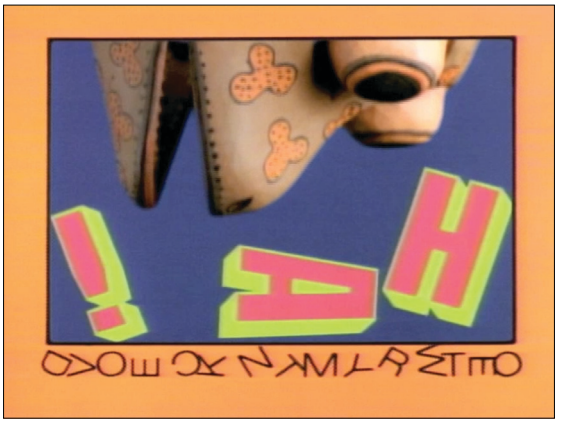
HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK™

H!A
CYNTKOMETRVDWEO

TV COMEDY NETWORK™
HA!


!AH
OVO ECKNTMYRHTEO

HA!


!AH

HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK™

A.H.
CYNTKOMETRVDWEO

Designed and produced by [Colossal] Pictures, San Francisco

HA! TV Comedy Network

(pages 282-294) and

Comedy Central

(pages 296 & 297) would always be linked for Fred/Alan.

A comedy channel had always been in the long term planning, but life and business got in the way and with the roller coaster of the cable television programming business of the 1980s it never got off the ground.

So it was a bit of a shock to MTV Networks management when HBO announced "The Comedy Channel" in early 1990. They were clearly coming after the MTV audience, with a programming "clock" that replicated the music video approach of three minute comedy, mostly stand-up and an occasional special. Once again, like with VH1, MTV went into crunch mode and brought in Fred/Alan. While they wanted to rely on us for branding and promotion (and eventually, a Chauncey Street produced series) our first gig was kind of a hoot.

The creative teams at all the MTV channels were tasked with coming up with a name, but after 400 tries they couldn't agree on anything, so they wanted us to give it a go.

"Send us over what you've got, so we don't spin our wheels." We were convinced there was a great name on the list but they were all dizzy with overwork and couldn't see it.

Bingo!

HA! was on their list and we sold them on their own name and collected a fine fee to boot. Noel Frankel, our creative and art director intuitively understood our view that television logos had to be dynamic and move. He designed a logo where designers, illustrators, photographers and animators could all have a field day, with a mix-and-match of people, color and visual humor.

Everyone at the agency loved it. The HA! identity became some of Fred/Alan's favorite work.

Then reality hit. The brass tracks of business.

Both HBO and MTV Networks were spending a fortune competing to be funny. As they realized there was probably no one winner, their powers decided to merge so they each have half a dollar of profit.

The new network's original management didn't have a lot of imagination and in their infinite wisdom decided to name the channel CTV: Comedy Television. Nonetheless, as their branding and advertising agency Fred/Alan went to work on our patented positioning strategy.

Creative Director Bill Burnett got the assignment and he wrote a killer paper. He suggested that the channel needed to be the country's mecca for comic talent, the place where everyone wanted to be. Not unlike Detroit's Motown Records in the '60s. A 'comedy central,' if you will.

The next thing you know we got the word that CTV had a new name.

For reasons unclear, we didn't develop the new trademark. Based on what it was we could tell that the shop they chose, our friends and talented collaborators Corey & Co., weren't listened to at all.

HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK™

COMEDY CENTRAL
MOTEL
OFFICE

COMEDY
CENTRAL

COMEDY
CENTRAL

COMEDY
CENTRAL

COMEDY
CENTRAL

COMEDY
CENTRAL

COMEDY
CENTRAL

COMEDY
CENTRAL

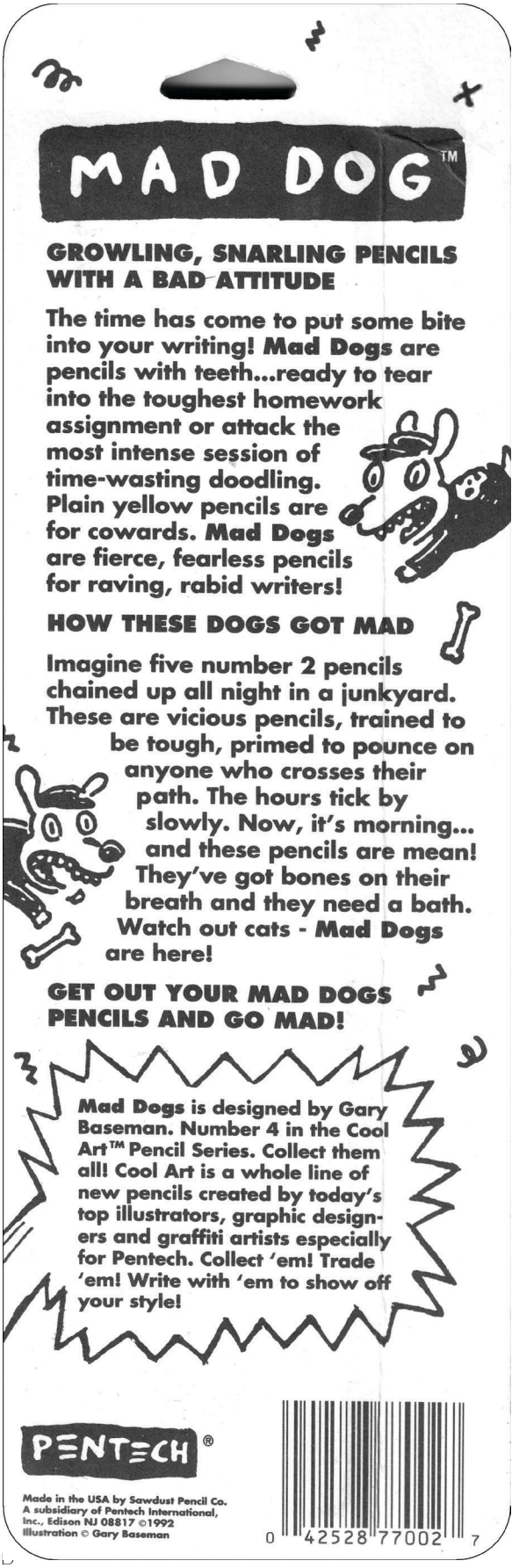
COMEDY
CENTRAL

Comedy Central network IDS Photography by Chip Simons Directed by Chris Koch

1992
PENTECH
INTERNATIONAL

Pentech, in Edison, New Jersey, was one of our last new Fred/Alan clients. Like Swatch wanting to be the MTV logo of watches, Pentech figured let's be the MTV logo of pencils. Not a dumb idea, we thought. Why not?

And who else other than Fred/Alan to help them make pencils fun?!


MAD DOG™
GROWLING, SNARLING PENCILS WITH A BAD ATTITUDE
The time has come to put some bite into your writing! Mad Dogs are pencils with teeth...ready to tear into the toughest homework assignment or attack the most intense session of time-wasting doodling. Plain yellow pencils are for cowards. Mad Dogs are fierce, fearless pencils for raving, rabid writers!
HOW THESE DOGS GOT MAD
Imagine five number 2 pencils chained up all night in a junkyard. These are vicious pencils, trained to be tough, primed to pounce on anyone who crosses their path. The hours tick by slowly. Now, it's morning... and these pencils are mean! They've got bones on their breath and they need a bath. Watch out cats - Mad Dogs are here!
GET OUT YOUR MAD DOGS PENCILS AND GO MAD!
Mad Dogs is designed by Gary Baseman. Number 4 in the Cool Art™ Pencil Series. Collect them all! Cool Art is a whole line of new pencils created by today's top illustrators, graphic designers and graffiti artists especially for Pentech. Collect 'em! Trade 'em! Write with 'em to show off your style!
PENTECH®
Made in the USA by Sawdust Pencil Co.
A subsidiary of Pentech International, Inc., Edison NJ 08817 ©1992
Illustration © Gary Baseman
0 42528 77002 7

'Comix' and Nutz! designed and written by Lou Brooks. 'Mad Dog' illustrated by Gary Baseman, written by David Burd

Irene's
THE FINEST FOR
GIFTS & SOUVENI
Atlantic City's Olde
Boardwalk Gift
THE Tonight SHOW
JAY LENO

THE Tonight SHOW
JAY LENO
RCG 470
COBB

WOODSTOCK
THE Tonight SHOW
JAY LENO

THE Tonight SHOW
JAY LENO

THE Tonight SHOW
JAY LENO
Georgia
On My Mind

THE Tonight SHOW
JAY LENO

THE Tonight SHOW
JAY LENO

THE Tonight SHOW
JAY LENO

Chip Simons (top), Chris Koch

Fred: Hollywood, baby! Our very last client popped up just as we'd announced that Fred/Alan was shutting its doors. A prominent New York movie producer introduced us to Jay Leno's manager, Helen Kushnick. She thought that our approach to MTV's creative was just what the still-secret takeover of Johnny Carson's Tonight Show needed for its packaging bumpers. Who were we to argue?

We'd loved working with photographer Chip Simons over the years, especially on the Comedy Central network IDs *(pages 296-9)* so when Helen gave a list of the hundreds of comedy club Jay had played over the years, we suggested that Chip photograph across the country with his distinctive styling at as many of those cities and states as possible.

THE TONIGHT SHOW

with Jay Leno

NBC TELEVISION NETWORK

1992

(Below) Chris Koch, Chris Gonzales, Steve McCarron

Fred/Alan's producer/director Chris Koch volunteered for this hardship duty, and soon enough the crew started the road trip.

The sad ending to the saga was that everyone at NBC and the Tonight Show was driven batshit crazy by Helen. Four months as the executive producer she was let go. As was all the work that she produced. Including what Fred/Alan produced. Except for the logo design. Sigh.

...

Produced by Chris Koch
Photography: Chip Simons
Logo design: Steve McCarron
Client: Helen Kushnick/NBC/The Tonight Show

1983-1992

FRED/ALAN

SELF PROMOTION & EPHEMERA

We promoted media brands for others.

Maybe we ought to do it for ourselves?

Holiday parties, advertising, PR and, of course, T-shirts followed. (Swag was always fun.) We're guessing we were probably annoying clients to ourselves.

WALKING FLOWERS
Fred/Alan
INC.

Louie, Louie. The Movie. Wait! The movie??

Since we originally started Fred/Alan to make films, we tried 'getting into the movies' with something other than a ticket. The company was somewhat stable by 1985 and we took a shot.

We'd always liked quickie teen movies and there was a popular spate of them happening right then so we took a flyer and, having no idea what we were doing, somehow succeeded in optioning the rights to one of the most popular (and strangely controversial) songs of the rock era, "Louie, Louie."

This ad was put together for the back cover of the 2nd MTV Video Music Awards program, figuring that something might happen since the channel was then in its first big flush of fame.

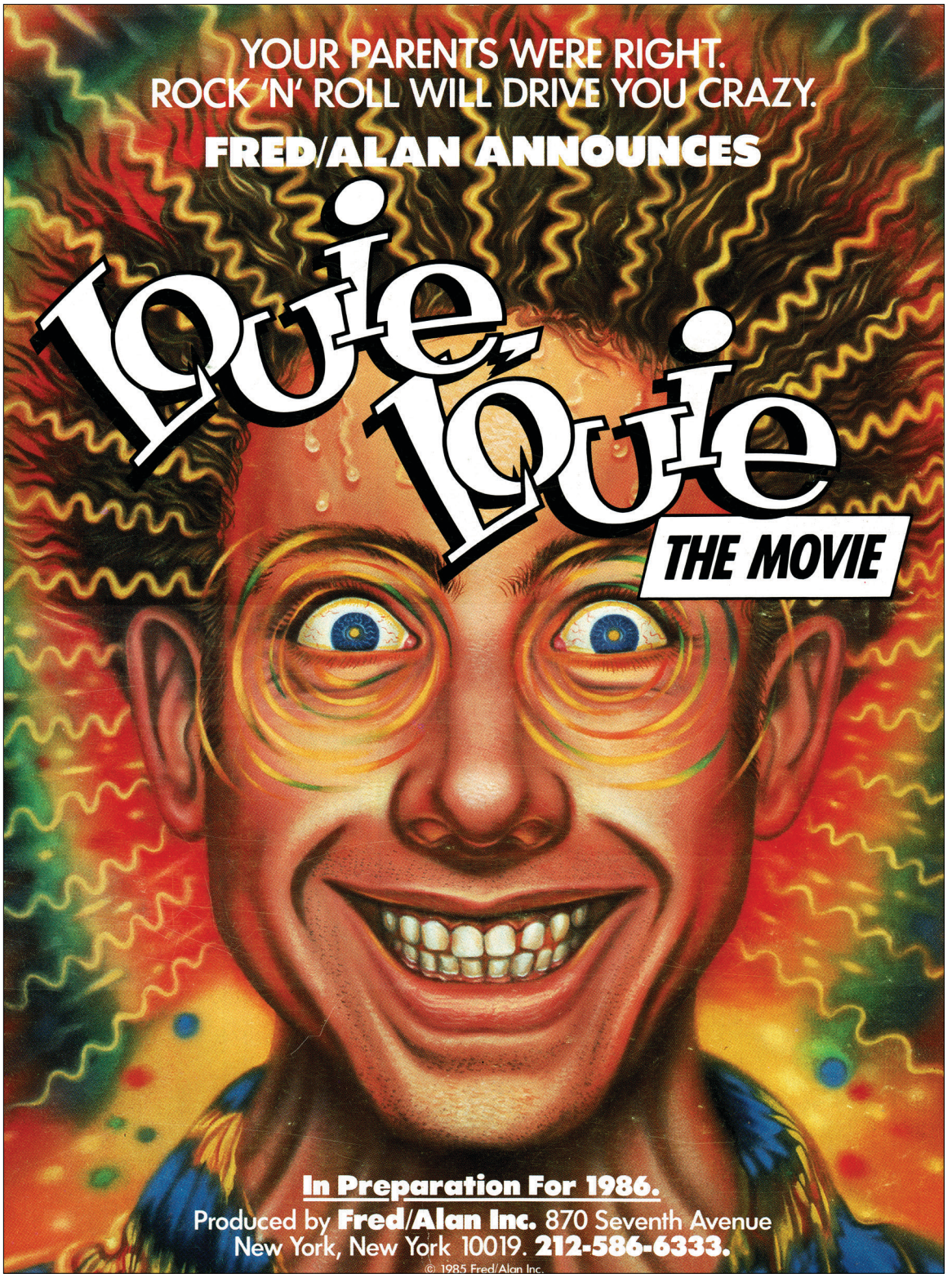
A script was written by Alan, Albie Hecht, and our director, Tommy Schlamme (pre-fame as a leading Hollywood television director).

Hollywood paid attention, we "took" a few meetings and subsequently optioned two other garage band classics, "Wooly Bully" and "Wipeout," wrote a couple more scripts, and... nothing.

Fred, for whatever reason, wasn't knocked out by the scripts –he now admits that his abject fear of moving forward clouded his judgement– and our efforts faded.

We were busy with the agency, and ultimately, we probably just didn't want it enough yet.

Front cover of the 2nd Annual MTV Video Music Awards September 13, 1985


YOUR PARENTS WERE RIGHT.
ROCK 'N' ROLL WILL DRIVE YOU CRAZY.
FRED/ALAN ANNOUNCES
Louie Louie
THE MOVIE
In Preparation For 1986.
Produced by Fred/Alan Inc. 870 Seventh Avenue
New York, New York 10019. 212-586-6333.
© 1985 Fred/Alan Inc.

Fred/Alan ad on the back cover of the 2nd AnnualMTV Video Music Awards September 13, 1985

The Fred/Alan Holiday Parties

We never really understood the "standard" protocols of running a successful agency, wining and dining clients with expensive dinners, golfing outings (you've got to be kidding!) and annual holiday gifts. We came to the conclusion that our version would be killer holiday parties.

We dipped our toes in the water with a roller disco party, then moved on to a "classy" venue, taking over New York's Museum of Broadcasting.

But things really hit a peak in 1987, when Ed Levine, account executive and former music promoter/producer/now food writer, suggested we book Dr. John* for our soiree. Creative director Noel Frankel illustrated an amazing invitation, sized as a 45rpm vinyl picture sleeve, using a Wite-Out!® brush! A belly dancing school studio on 8th Avenue was booked. Sylvia's, New York's "Queen of Soul Food," catered and the doctor's band played on their night off. They completely blew the ceiling off the place, and people hearing the music from the street started wandering in.

What a night!

Afterwards, we wondered if the events could get any better, but from '87 on we tried hard to top ourselves. By the end, we just might have done it.

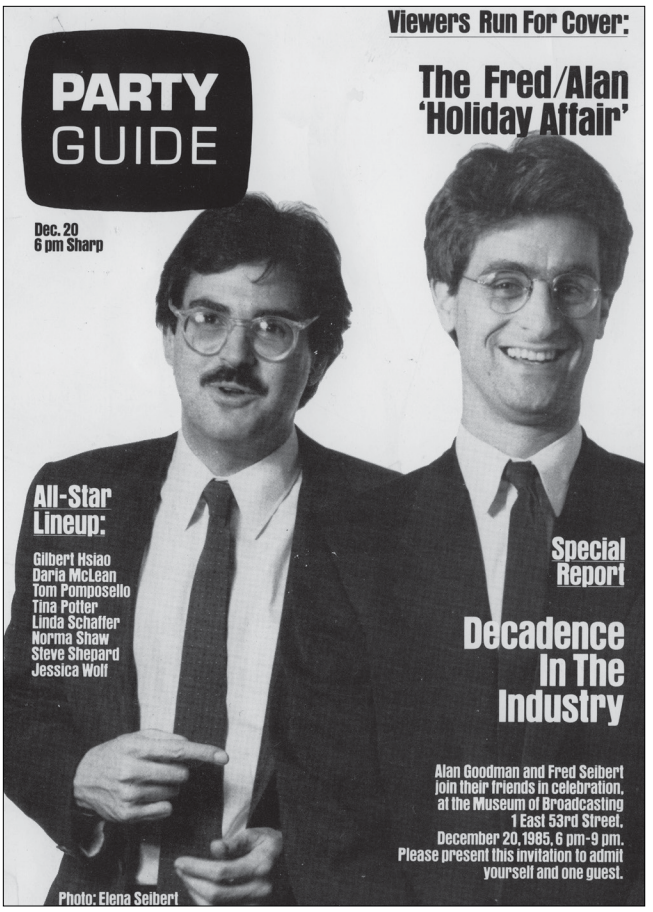
We went out with a sparrow!
We didn't know it was our last hurrah. We'd just moved into a new space that we'd designed for ourselves, we were celebrating. For the December 1990 party the entertainment booked was the Calypso King of the World, Mighty Sparrow, known for getting his fans in giant Caribbean stadiums up on their feet to dance. By the end of our contracted second set in a downtown Manhattan restaurant, his shirt had come off, the crowd was sweating as much as he was, and he assured us he wasn't done yet. Sparrow came back for another rockin' couple of hours!

For some reason, Art Director Tom Godici thought it would be worth his time to burn the edges of all 500 holiday poster invitations by hand. We weren't arguing, Tom always made sure his work was up to his personal creative standards. He lived them.

*Ed and Dr. John/MacRebennack had done a couple of wonderful records together, and Ed later suggested him for fantastic campaign we did for TV Heaven.

Featuring: WE'LL HAVE A BLUE, BLUE CHRISTMAS WITH (OR WITHOUT) YOU
FRED/ALAN RHYTHM & BLUES
CHRISTMAS PARTY
Live music by Dr. John.
Soul food from Sylvia's.
At this really strange place we found:
Fazils International
743 8th Avenue
(between 46th and 47th Streets)
Second Floor
Monday, December 14
6-10 pm
Come with the one you turn to when you're blue...
with this, admit two.

Design and Wite-Out!® illustration by Noel Frankel 1987


Viewers Run For Cover:
PARTY GUIDE
The Fred/Alan 'Holiday Affair'
Dec. 20
6 pm Sharp
All-Star Lineup:
Gilbert Hsiao
Daria McLean
Tom Pomposello
Tina Potter
Linda Schaffer
Norma Shaw
Steve Shepard
Jessica Wolf
Special Report
Decadence In The Industry
Alan Goodman and Fred Seibert join their friends in celebration, at the Museum of Broadcasting 1 East 53rd Street, December 20, 1985, 6 pm-9 pm. Please present this invitation to admit yourself and one guest.
Photo: Elena Seibert

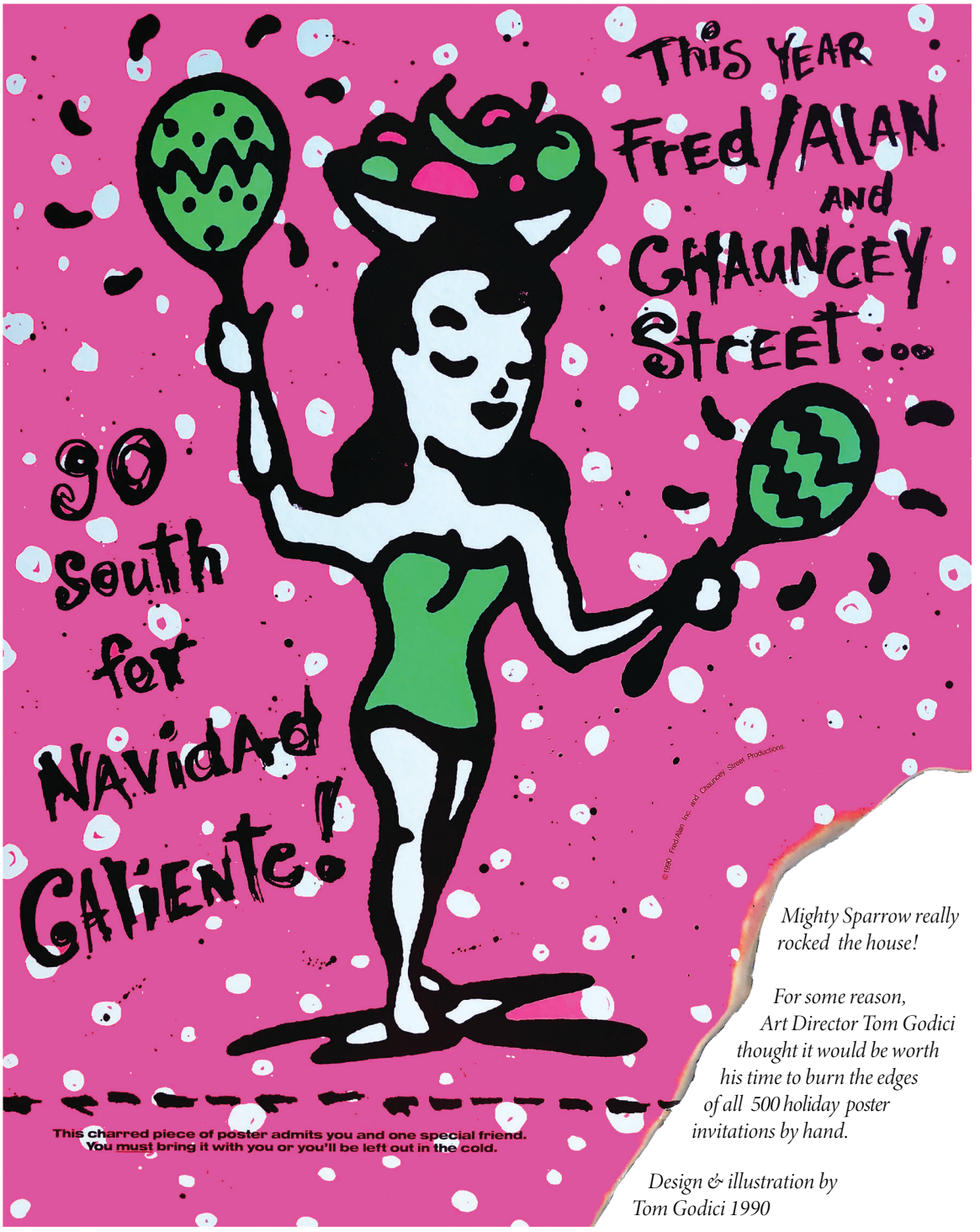
Our attempt at a classy 'Holiday Affair' at the Museum of Broadcasting, with a knock-off "TV Guide" invitation. 1985 Photograph by Elena Seibert

IN THE JAMES BOND TRADITION!
See Through Walls!
READ THE PRINT
DECEMBER 17, 1986
6:30 PM-9:30 PM
MUSEUM OF HOLOGRAPHY
11 MERCER STREET
(BET. CANAL AND GRAND)
FRED/ALAN INVITES YOU TO SPEND
CHRISTMAS IN THE THIRD DIMENSION!
SANTA CLAUS - a la mode!
Here I am—in my time kit—with my sack of gifts in one hand and a Sitrup Pump in the other.
Not quite the sort of Christmas I've been used to. But still it's Christmas, and still there's the same spirit of good will—even if there has to be a little less "good-cheer".
Toffee and Chocolate were my time-honoured standbys for Christmas. In fact, Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without them.
So I'm glad that some of those good things are still to be had—even although there is only half as much as usual.
X-RAY SPECS
An Hilarious Optical Illusion
$1.00
X-RAY VISION
$1.00
Greatest illusion of the century! Apparently see bones thru skin, see thru clothes, etc. Amaze and embarrass everyone! Regular size glasses with built-in optical device.
☐ 3762. XRAY Specs Only ..... $1.00 per Pair
And That's Not All!
You also get this great tree ornament...cut around the eye in a circle, punch a hole in it and use some thread to hang it! Or, affix it to your forehead for that snappy guru look.
OUR EYES.
OUR EYES.
Barbara Ben-David
Alan Goodman
Gilbert Hsiao
Elliot Krowe
Sheila Lipkin
Daria McLean
Fred Seibert
Stephen Shepard
Mark Tomizawa
Jessica Wolf

Why not try a museum again? The Museum of Holography 1986 Design by Corey & Co., Boston

Let's try music again! At a pool hall!
Texas singer/guitarist Johnny Copeland was 1983's Blues Entertainer of the Year.
Fred missed it, he had the flu.
Design by Noel Frankel 1988

food CALIENTE!
[At BAYAMO · 704 BROADWAY]
MUSIC MUY CALIENTE!
[The Mighty Sparrow]
DANCING MAS CALIENTE!
[YOU!]
MONDAY, Dec. 10,
From 6 P.M.
(until WE All
BURN out.)



Mighty Sparrow really rocked the house!

For some reason, Art Director Tom Godici thought it would be worth his time to burn the edges of all 500 holiday poster invitations by hand.

Design & illustration by Tom Godici 1990

While you were busy looking for youth...

Fred/Alan INC.

Once we added 'advertising agency' to our rep as the premiere media branders, we thought that maybe we ought to go after some non-media business. But how?

...we were busy looking for you.

"record club"

MTV MUSIC TELEVISION

So how come we keep missing each other? Maybe it's because you've been seeking traditional solutions to the unorthodox problems that face advertisers trying to reach youth. And we want nothing to do with tradition.

You see, we break all the rules. Our clients don't mind. Besides making them a lot of money, we're taller, on average, than they are.

But size in an ad agency isn't everything. Our staff, numbering well over 26, offers everyone from well-seasoned professionals with over 20 years of advertising experience on a full range of products and services,

to unadulterated novices who wouldn't know an ad if it jumped out of the bushes and bit them on the neck.

We're that rare mix of competence and ignorance you can't find just anywhere. People who still manage to make sense in over ten feet of water. An agency where the hallways bend at right-angles to each other, water flows downward and lunch-hour chewing aids digestion. An agency where youth is a state of mind, even for products not targeted for kids–because no one ever made any money making people feel old.

NICKELODEON®

Five hard and fast rules to reach youth (the ones you don't know personally).
1. Use color sparingly.
2. Employ contortionists.
3. Lecture whenever possible.
4. Consider the time/space continuum.
5. Buy MTV.
MTV MUSIC TELEVISION

Having spent several years positioning clients, we noticed that most agencies wanted to be everything for everyone, all the better for having big billings.

Let's have a sales brochure!

Fred/Alan became the only agency that focused on audiences under 35 years old. We printed up a brochure and started trolling for new business.

We never wanted to become a youth agency. But then, we never set out to be an agency at all.

Fred/Alan Inc. joined the fray of advertising agencies competing for your business just a little over a year ago. We started with one client, who had one request—don't be like so many other agencies whose burnt out, commonplace solutions were completely missing the target.

Their hope was, our experience in marketing to young people would translate well to the advertising arena. They believed in us because of our work in helping to create, and then in marketing through TV and print advertising, the most successful new innovation in television programming since color: MTV.

Fred Seibert and Alan Goodman never worked on Madison Avenue. They were, however, clients. And as clients, they received all the experience they will ever need to understand how most agencies treat clients. You know; the top tier talent pitches the business, and the juniors work on it. Or, they give presentations that seem revolutionary and fresh, but the real work lies there on the page. Too often, agencies use your money to build their portfolios, rather than build your business.

Unlike other agency principals, who tend to be former print advertising writers and art directors who learn about television, Fred/Alan started in TV. Unique is the agency's ability to bring television impact into print advertising and other non-traditional media vehicles.

Today Fred/Alan is a full service agency with $26 million in billings, primarily serving clients who need to reach a market hard to reach, difficult to persuade.

Like the companies confident enough to be attracted to us, we are known to reject proven paths, obvious solutions, safe alternatives. Because for the youth market, they just don't work.

Many advertisers will reject us out of hand, looking for the comfort of an agency that works in traditional ways. With the increasing competition for the Baby Boom and youth markets, we wish these advertisers luck.

Why a youth agency is better than an agency that does youth.

Some agencies today are doing good work in marketing to youth. Scattered, hit and miss—but fine if an advertiser gets the right creative team on the right day.

Fred/Alan Inc. stands apart by bringing different ideas and approaches to the whole process of marketing to youth.

And what sometimes gets ignored completely is our different idea about what youth is.

At Fred/Alan, every one of us considers him or herself a part of Young America, even though some of us are extremely big babies—a few are (gasp!) pushing 40.

How do we get away with it?

Youth is older than ever. One study after another concludes, our generation of Baby Boomers—the first to celebrate youth rather than celebrate growing up—is vastly different from our parents' generation. We continue to identify with young ideas, young attitudes and young products. We got married later, had kids later—and remain more distrustful of advertising messages than our parents were. Yet, we've retained our (youthful) free-spending ways.

We are part of a culture that is media-saturated and entertainment-obsessed. In fact, we are a generation that has never known a home without a television set. Growing up in front of the TV has made us extremely image-conscious.

Which means the messages aimed at us must be fashioned just right.

The group just behind Baby Boomers—often called the Baby Bust—is smaller in size. They have grown up in a world even more enriched with television alternatives and marketing targeted to them. Advertisers seeking to reach this group (currently, aged 12 to 23) who are accustomed to the wider Baby Boom crowd will have to work even harder to find the young adults of the future.

And just behind this group are the children of the Baby Boomers... The Boomlet. We've delayed our families to extend our youth, but our kids are here at last, with many more on the way.

Studies show the kids who make up this Boomlet are spending their own money on things they want. They have increasing influence over what the whole family buys. Many even do a lot of the shopping for Mom and Dad. TV has directly caused their awareness of brand image and why it's important.

Children and young adults today are an extremely savvy brood. Still, advertising agencies continually try to ape youth culture in order to sell to it. (A single word in this week's TV spot, copied from last week's music video, might be an instant signal the product is O-U-T.)

Young America demands a special attitude for each product or service. This is often much harder to create than showing a prospective client exactly how a particular campaign conforms to the agency's successful philosophy, even though that philosophy may be totally inappropriate to the task at hand.

The Baby Boomers, Baby Bust and Boomlet we've produced are the big demographic today—58% of the entire U.S. population. We have the money and are spending it, but only on what makes us look and feel right.

Your best bet for attracting each group is through people who are intimately connected with the media and image-making developments of this entire decade.

People who are steeped in television, and are still creating for advertisers the non-traditional mediums new products and services demand.

People like us.

We hate advertising.

Advertising is a product at many agencies, where the first priority is winning new business and the second is keeping it.

The heck with the work. That's not even on the list.

We have a different approach.

We enjoy our jobs. We try to control our enthusiasm, but you will probably see it happen in front of you: We'll be in your office for a chat, when suddenly a casual comment will turn into an explosion of excitement. Suddenly, a client meeting will turn into a creative session, with everyone adding nuances to the clear, commanding idea we've discovered together. We'll all leave content, satisfied, secure. We've solved it, we've got the ad.

Then something else will happen. You'll get a call from us. You were pleased with what we already gave you. But we couldn't stop there. We went home to try to beat it, and we have.

The work comes first at Fred/Alan. The unexpected idea, the oddball media plan, the thrill of finding you really can get people to do what you want them to do, so that the client profits.

We figure some day we'll win all the new clients we can handle, and keep all our favorites. As long as we continue to hate advertising, and to love what we do.

We won't hire any art directors or writers. No account execs, either.

At Fred/Alan we believe in the structure most agencies use, but not the formality.

In our offices, everyone is welcomed to pitch in at every stage. Our creatives don't just dream up the headlines—marketers to the end, they frequently insist on writing the strategy statements. Likewise, some of our favorite creative executions are the products of the account team. Everyone here thinks media. How could we not? How do you begin to write an ad unless you know how it will run? And since a writer wants an ad to be noticed, and an account executive wants to prove to the client we get results, frequently our media suggestions are the most creative part of the package.

What you see is what you want. If you decide you're more comfortable around our account executives, they will present the work to you; if you'd rather see the creative team, they're yours. We are all comfortable with your inevitable objections and look forward to either overcoming them or fixing the work. Of course, the top talent in the company is involved in every piece of work we turn out, and will be available to you.

Our business cards don't include titles. What's important to us is having good ideas and doing good things with them.

But what we'll never have is a writer, an art director or an account executive who can't contribute in other ways. We just wouldn't know what to do with them.

We all work for the media department.

One of those mysteries of the advertising world is, what happened to the spot (or the page) after it shipped? How come no one saw it? Why was there no response? Sometimes the answer is, the creative wasn't effective. Sometimes the answer is, the media wasn't creative.

Frequently, advertising executions truly get executed. Killed by media plans with no spark. Annihilated by planners with no new ideas. Who decreed that creatives and account execs carry portfolios full of ideas, and media types carry print-outs?

Certainly, there's nothing more important than buying the greatest number of the right impressions for the fewest number of dollars. And knowing how to blast through the claims of media salesmen to get at the truth of their vehicle's delivery. And using negotiating leverage to turn ever-shrinking budgets into visible campaigns. But too many times, the solutions are by the book. A book that relies too heavily on "the numbers," and not enough on imagination.

At Fred/Alan, we can't seem to find that book.

Media rules. Media is our first consideration when a new project begins. We ask ourselves, how can we take advantage of the same tools everyone else uses, and use them in a new way? Or, how can we invent a new media opportunity to increase the impact of our message?

Instead of shoehorning a message into a budget plan, we build the plan first—and find it can frequently be the key to unlocking sensational new creative thoughts.

We insist on this media orientation, from the top on down. Our president learned about media by working for a boss who insisted he verify billboard space salesmen's claims by counting the cars that passed the boards. Our creative director got his job not from his reel of multi-gazillion dollar spots, but for a media idea he had for a snipe campaign—you know, those quickie posters that appear mysteriously alongside construction sites in the dead of night. It was novel. It was cost-effective. And it was right.

Many of our top people have worked with major media, and know it from the inside out. That helps our clients enormously. So does our determination to make every media decision important, regardless of the account's size. How else would our advertising for clients with limited budgets be so well-known?

Yes, we're proud of our creative product. Including our media —at times, the most creative exercise at Fred/Alan.

We don't know anything about your business.

Aren't you always suspicious of suppliers who assume they know what you need, the moment they walk in the door? The ones who tell you in their tone, body language and over-confidence nothing you can say will catch them off-guard?

We assume the opposite.

Just because we may have worked with clients in businesses related to yours—or even with direct competitors—doesn't mean we know anything about your business. You have your own unique view of the marketplace, your customer and your rivals, and the product or service you market is, in some way, incomparable to anything that has come before it or anything that will follow.

But we learn fast. Your team of account and creative people are relentless detectives, trained to uncover the truths about your livelihood. We simply ask you a lot of questions, some very basic, some downright soul-searching. Because the questions can be disarmingly naive, your answers may surprise even you.

We promise the exercise will be rewarding for you. When you start seeing your marketing situation in a new light, the outlandish and unexpected solutions we propose will suddenly seem to be the most obvious ways to attack it.

You see, we don't know anything about your business. And none of the hackneyed, tired, copycat approaches to advertising it.

We have no respect for money.

Our reel has one spot that cost $250,000 to make. And another that cost $50 (okay, $75 counting the soundtrack). Our chief financial officer would like us just to show the high ticket stuff, but we're often more proud of what we can do for next to nothing.

The simplest work can be the work best recognized, too. We've spent weeks planning and shooting the most complicated special effects work, only to win Clio awards for pieces conceived and shot in an afternoon.

We learned this lesson a long time ago. The idea matters, not the budget.

We'll spend to save. Please don't get the idea we avoid extravagance. When a project demands a touch of class and opulence, we won't skimp.

But we will always try to plan the most efficient use of your dollars. We look for every opportunity to squeeze value out of an expensive photo shoot, negotiate with all our suppliers, and can usually strike deals with people whose prices are inflexible with anyone else. People grant us concessions because they like working with us: we are reasonable, our work is more fun to do, and we appreciate them. Sometimes appreciation is more welcome than a big check you earned, hating every minute of the work.

You can't trust people who tell you they treat your money like it was their own. How do you know how they spend their own money?

We have another standard. We treat your money like it was yours.

Fred Seibert

Like all the people working for him, Fred Seibert can boast an eclectic background. He has directed promos, produced records, done layout and design and planned and bought media. That he's done all of these (for a day at least) gives him tremendous perspective. Fred has the inimitable ability to see problems from uncommon angles. If everyone is looking at something from one direction, he'll go around the back and find a completely new approach. He is also tapped into some mysterious network that informs him of what is cool even before it's cool. That same network constantly provides him with a pool of the best, freshest talent around.

Fred figures that the only way to top his success at MTV (which prompted *Adweek* to name him one of eight "leaders of the new media revolution") is to grow a company that accomplishes what he considers are the three most important criteria for a business: have fun, make money and like the people you work with. So far all of that has been true of Fred/Alan.

Alan Goodman

Dubbed "Mr. Headline" by an unnamed source, Alan Goodman has the ability to accurately sum up anything (a person, a situation, an idea) in four words or less. He can capture the truth and be entertaining at the same time. A warped personality in a straight package, Alan oversees, and collaborates in, the production of the agency's creative product. Actually, "collaborates" is the perfect word for Alan's method—he even considers our clients as partners. Alan is also acknowledged to be a superb editor—of words, pictures, film and sound. This skill, combined with expert knowledge of production, helps explain the quality of our work.

A long-time friend of Fred's (since their undergraduate days at Columbia), they were reunited when Alan moved from his position as Copy Chief at CBS Records to become Creative Director at MTV. As partners there they shared in making MTV an international icon. Alan shares Fred's vision of a successful business, and contributes to the goal of having fun by keeping the place supplied with peanuts and popcorn. He has an excellent singing voice.

Albie Hecht

Coming from the same "media-fiend" background as his colleagues, Albie Hecht has been involved with video all his life—as an experimenter, writer, director and producer. Aside from his skill in finding and supervising top film and television talent, Albie is also one of the best appraisers of people and business situations any of us have ever worked with. But even more valuable than that, he brings to his work a child-like exuberance; enthusiasm that is energizing to all who work with him. He never needs to be pushed—to the contrary, occasionally his excitement requires us to hold him back.

Immensely creative and apparently infallible, Albie was catalytic in many Fred/Alan successes: "Greetings from Gilbert," a Cinemax Comedy Experiment, won an ACE Award; the "Showtime Police" promo campaign won a Monitor Award; and the concert entitled "One Night Stand" earned a Grammy nomination. He has also produced and directed videos for such recording artists as John Cougar Mellencamp and Amy Grant. We like having him here because he knows how to put together a truly killer party.

Troy Ellen Dixon

It's hard to say what has contributed more to Troy Ellen Dixon's professional demeanor; her fifteen-plus years in direct marketing, or the trials and triumphs of raising two kids. While it is impossible not to be impressed with the scope and depth of her work experience—Troy has gained know-how from such agencies as Wunderman Worldwide, Ayer Direct and O&M Direct, working on business like Bell Atlantic, Xerox and the Army—it was in raising two children that she really refined her management skills. Somehow she manages to be diligent and organized even while dealing with such an unruly crowd as we.

At Fred/Alan, Troy oversees our direct marketing group. Everyone in the creative department says she has a great sense of humor for an account person.

Ed Levine

Ed Levine began his work-life producing records and writing about music for the *New York Times Magazine*. Though he sharpened his advertising teeth handling Warner-Lambert, Kodak and Nestle business at J. Walter Thompson, Ed credits his time promoting jazz concerts for Carnegie Hall as the real source of his marketing acumen. An excellent strategist with an MBA from Columbia, he also has first-hand knowledge of every restaurant in the free world, in addition to a formidable hook shot.

At Fred/Alan, Ed supervises the daily operation of our account team. His patience, reason and warmth make him an easy person to talk to—and likable, even when his job demands that he be critical or demanding. His honesty and personal qualities have made him the unofficial in-house social worker.

Noel Frankel

Charged with responsibility for the large volume and variety of advertising that we produce for our clients, Noel Frankel is always up for the challenge. Referred to by some as a "prolific ad machine," Noel has the uncanny ability to come at an old problem from a completely fresh point of view—every time. His skill at homing in on the important aspects of an advertising problem is mostly innate, but has been refined during his twenty-plus years in the business. His experience includes affiliations with agencies such as Jordan Case McGrath, Smith/Greenland and Scali McCabe Sloves.

Aside from providing Fred/Alan with the use of his brain, Noel also serves as mentor and friend to his creative staff, is a favored party guest and, for balance, functions as resident cynic to the Upper West Side. Spend a few hours with Noel and you'll know some things.

Awards:

Clio

BPME

New York Art Director's Club

International Film & TV

Video Producers Association

Broadcast Designers Association

Print

The One Show

Monitor

CTAM

W.C. Handy Blues Award

Fred/Alan

BARQ'S BITES THE BIG APPLE.

A streetwise campaign on a shoestring budget turned a new product introduction into an event.

In May, 1990, Fred/Alan received an emergency assignment from one of our newest clients, Barq's soft drinks. Barq's, a Louisiana-based company that for years had been quietly putting out a fine line of quality soft drinks—including the #2 root beer in the country—made a sudden, unexpected deal with a major northeastern bottler. Now they wanted us to create the advertising that would spearhead their first assault on New York. Their challenge to us: Make a splash. Overnight. In New York City. With virtually no budget. We took a deep breath and went to work.

If it looks like an event, it's an event.

"We needed to make the product a phenomenon, like MTV," says Rick Hill, vice president of advertising for Barq's Inc. But how could we convince jaded New Yorkers that the arrival of a new brand of root beer was an event? By advertising Barq's product line the way events are advertised—using "snipes" on the temporary wooden walls around New York City construction sites.

A breakthrough in creative media.

Snipes are used all the time by movie studios, concert promoters, nightclubs, and political groups. But they had never before been used for packaged goods. By placing our message at street level it wasn't seen as *advertising* so much as an *announcement*— an event that everyone (especially kids) should be on the lookout for.

A simple creative execution.

Meanwhile, our creative was very straightforward. Above photographs of the distinctive Barq's cans, we ran a series of headlines that told the story of Barq's imminent arrival in New York. All the headlines had "attitude"... *It's gonna be great New York—trust us. You should care deeply whether your store has it.* And, *So try 'em already.* We papered the town with these messages, and when they were covered up by competing snipes we papered the town again. Then we backed up our guerrilla campaign with just a touch of radio and television advertising. Now all that remained to be seen were the results.

The results are in.

In the month following our advertising, Barq's became the # 1 root beer in New York with a 22.1% share of the market (up from 7.5% the month before). We even beat out venerable A & W Root Beer. And Barq's French Vanilla Creme conquered the cream soda capital of the world with an astounding 26% market share (up from 8.1% the month before). Barq's had taken Manhattan by storm.

"Fred/Alan...has evolved quite naturally into an agency with special knowledge in the area of youth."
—**Philip H. Dougherty,** ***The New York Times***

"The ads Fred/Alan produced to launch and sustain MTV...suggest they're very good at what they do. Equally revealing is the agency's devotion to selling."
—**Richard Morgan, Editor-in-Chief,** ***Adweek***

"...the image iconoclasts of the '80s."
—***Advertising Age***

"[Fred] Seibert and [Alan] Goodman continue to explore uncharted areas. Where there's a challenge or risk involved they love to jump in and see what they can make out of it."
—***The Village Voice***

"The only rule book they brought with them was the one giving license to unbridled creativity...Fred/Alan Inc. are living proof that beginners can start from scratch, break all the rules and still take New York."
—***The Chicago Tribune***

Fred/Alan buys the New York Times.

About five years after Fred/Alan launched as the world's first media branding company with added production capabilities for promotion, specials and series, there was a big change. Nickelodeon, and then MTV, asked us to expand our services to become a "full service" advertising agency, something neither Alan nor Fred had ever contemplated and would require adding creative, print production and media buying personnel. After about a minute we decided, what the hell!, let's go for it.

Did we have any idea what we were doing? No way! But, that had never stopped us before. The big question was, outside of our cable television and music biz network of contacts, how the heck does an ad agency get some new clients?

In for a dime, in for a bunch of dollars. We decided we'd take a big swing.

Our company never did too much advertising for itself (it was expensive), so if we did every word had to count. The New York Times was, by far, the most influential publication in the advertising industry; after all, for decades, Manhattan had been the epicenter of the world's great ad agencies. Besides location location location, in the 1980s and 90s, Times columnist Phil Dougherty had a reputation as the most honest, authoritative columnist in the business, and that made the paper a must-read for anyone who was anyone, client side included. Any ad in there would guarantee outsized attention, whether for sales of a client's wares or for the agency who created the advertising in the first place.

Well, why shouldn't we be our own client, and use the Times to generate new business leads? We could buy remnant space at will for less than half price (even then that was five figures!) , our current clients would feel like they were with a pretty together agency, and businesses outside New York would take notice and call. Did it work? You bet.

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Client: Fred/Alan, Inc. New York
Copy & design: Noel Frankel & Alan Goodman
Photography: Elena Seibert

Fred/Alan INC.

HOW DO YOU REACH THE YOUTH MARKET? THAT'S FOR US TO KNOW AND FOR YOU TO FIND OUT.

Who needs an ad agency that specializes in the youth market?

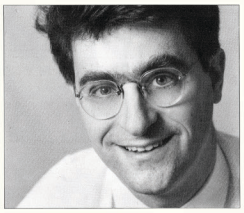
Over the past few decades we've seen a trend toward specialization in nearly every field...except advertising. Doctors, lawyers, writers, instructors, auto mechanics - all have cultivated special areas of expertise in order to better serve an increasingly splintered and specialized world.

But for some reason, advertising agencies are still expected to be all things to all products...and all demographic groups. At Fred/Alan Inc., we question the wisdom of continuing to do business that way. Would you go to a tree surgeon to perform an operation on your cat?

We know how to advertise to people under 35. We think.

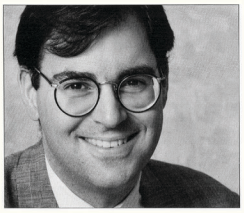
A brief look at prime-time television will confirm that when it comes to targeting the youth market, most agencies follow the age-old maxim "Nothing succeeds like excess." The big jingle, the flashy quick-cuts, the rock 'n' roll celebrity endorser - this is what you see time and again on TV. Does it work? Is it worth the millions that are spent on it? And do you have those millions to spend marketing *your* product?

By *specializing* in the youth market, Fred/Alan has discovered hitherto uncharted passageways into the hearts and minds of people under 35. We believe our methods are more effective - and more cost -effective - than the splashy campaigns other agencies roll out with alarming regularity. We think - about what our audience is doing when they encounter our ad; about alternative, unconventional media possibilities; about new ways to stand a selling proposition on its head and give it a fresh perspective. And the results speak for themselves.



"Over the past decade, our role in helping to create and market MTV Networks has forced us to develop unconventional ways to advertise to people under 35...The big advantage we offer new clients is that we already *know* the youth market. We're not starting from square one with each assignment. We come to the table armed with a wealth of *focused* experience about how to sell to young people because that's all we do. It's all we've ever done."

Fred Seibert



"We started out in this business as clients. And when we were on the client's side of the desk we had our fill of ad agencies treating us like ignorant boobs. That's why our position as an agency is: You're the expert on your business - teach us. And then let us take that knowledge and translate it into something that will make young consumers respond. *That* we know how to do."

Alan Goodman

We helped invent MTV.

Possibly our single most compelling credential is our longstanding association with MTV - the most successful new innovation in television programming since color. MTV has made such inroads into today's culture that it's hard to believe it didn't even exist then years ago. And we were among the small group of pioneers who invented it. We helped develop the way it looks and sounds. Then we marketed it with a revolutionary TV and print campaign.

And that way only the beginning.

Since then we've had quite an impressive string of successes. Which is why we've prepared a complete booklet of *Fred/Alan Case Histories*. If you think your company could be doing a better job at reaching young consumers, then you might find it interesting to read about some of our exciting adventures in advertising, such as...

How we helped *Swatch* sell out its entire inventory of expensive, diamond-studded timepieces - and *still* maintain its hip, inexpensive brand identity.

- How we turned *Nick at Nite* - a cable channel that shows mostly reruns - into one of the hottest channels on TV.
- How we used tried-and-true selling techniques to create a revolutionary way for *Showtime* to win new subscribers.
- How we helped *Barq's* soft drinks outgrow the Louisiana bayou and become the root beer that took Manhattan.

And many more.

Clip out the coupon below and send it to *Fred/Alan Inc., 708 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003*. Or call Fred Seibert or Ed Levine at (212) 598-9700. We'll send you the complete *Fred/Alan Case Histories*, plus our reel, and maybe a few surprises.

Fred/Alan INC.

Advertising for those who think young.

For more information about Fred/Alan, mail in this coupon today. Or call Fred Seibert or Ed Levine at 212-598-9700.
708 Broadway, 8th Floor
New York, NY 10003

Name: _____ Address: _____

Title: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Company: _____ Telephone: _____

Psst! My name is Reggie. I'm the coupon maker here at Fred/Alan. If you don't cut this coupon and send it in, they'll think it was my fault. They'll claim I made the dotted line too dotted or something. And then they'll make me spend another night on the mechanical dachund. Please, I beg you, mail this coupon *today!*

New York Times full page advertisement 1991

Vol. XXX No. 8 EASTERN EDITION February 20, 1989 • $2.50

ADWEEK®

Back to Square One: Does It Take Baby Boomers to Do Great TV Ads?

By Richard Morgan

NEW YORK—There are people out there who don't get the meaning of a Danny Thomas "spit kit," people for whom the height of artistic expression during their formative years was not an album cover. Some folks even think "rerun" when asked about The Patty Duke Show. (The correct response, of course, is to think "classic.") And some of these people—believe it or not—hold responsible positions in advertising agencies.

Just the opposite is true at Fred/Alan, whose cofounders met in college and years later, after respective careers in radio and records, reunited at Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment Co. These two guys—Fred Seibert, 37, and Alan Goodman, 35—have positioned their two-year-old shop as one that taps the sensibilities of the TV generation. That's the generation under 35, but, as Seibert says, "between you and me, honestly, it's anyone under 45."

The ads Fred/Alan produced to launch and sustain MTV (they served as Warner Amex's "creative trouble-shooters" and agency contacts before breaking away as an independent agency) suggest they're very good at what they do. So does their work for MTV sister stations VH-1 and Nickelodeon.

With billings of $25 million, they obviously have other clients as well. But it's an account they picked up just last week that promises to make them a real competitor.

That business came from Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. And though worth only $1.5 million in terms of billings, it's invaluable in terms of significance. Fred/Alan, which as an assignment handled the promotion for Ultra-Violet's *Famous for 15 Minutes*, an HBJ property, is now the publisher's agency of record. That means the spirit that picked rock singers to sell us on the comparison—"TV? Or MTV?"—has broken through in a big way. It has captured the attention of an old-line printing house, whose very medium is antithetical to that of the TV generation's.

Considering where we are on "the time-space continuum," as Fred/Alan might phrase it, it's surprising something of this sort didn't happen sooner. Fifty-six percent of the population is 35 or younger. And while boomers continue to move through life's timeline like the proverbial pig in a python, the original TV generation merely gives way to other TV generations. They'll have taken over, no doubt, at a time when big agencies are still stuck with leadership weaned on print rather than television.

So, what does this mean for advertising? How much does the medium to which one best relates really matter? Recent experience—even at Fred/Alan—suggests it doesn't have to mean or matter much at all.

What's relevant is how thorough and open an agency can be. And the problem confronting many agencies today is they're not very good at either. Or so Fred/Alan came to believe while sitting in the client's chair at Warner-Amex. "There would be so many meetings," Seibert recalls, "where I'd say, 'Look, can't we just go back to square one?' And every time the agency would say, 'No, we know what we're talking about; we know all the rules for this product.' I could never get anybody to start at the beginning."

So, in starting their own agency, Seibert and Goodman promised themselves they would always start at the beginning. It shows—even in the way they allocate office space. While most agencies seem to be laid out with only print in mind, Fred/Alan devotes just as much space to video production.

Equally revealing is the agency's devotion to selling—an innocence of mission competing veterans might also chalk up to Fred/Alan's client days. Explains agency creative Noel Frankel, who claims to have "worked everywhere" during his two decades in the business: "They don't even know that the reason things get done in this business is to glorify the agency. They think you actually work for your clients."

Commentary

So far, Fred/Alan has appealed mostly to advertisers with youthful products (from Swatch to software) or to established brands in search of new audiences (such as General Foods' Pebbles or Seagram's Myers's Rum).

"Those accounts expect from the get-go solutions that do not resemble anything from the past," Seibert says. "Only with generally advertised products does it seem things have to get dull and flat."

The latter, of course, is a fallacy. As George Lois, with whom Fred/Alan created "I want my MTV," contends: "Too much is made of the fact that the TV generation thinks differently. Any slow-paced commercial with a big idea is more exciting than a commercial with 50 cuts but no meaning."

Seibert is the first to agree, even going so far as to disavow the "look" supposedly spawned by MTV. "The one thing it had was a shameless willingness to steal anything necessary to support the context," he says. Whatever look was generated by MTV came "from always going back to square one."

Even Fred/Alan is surprised at what they always find back there. Ten years ago, after reading David Ogilvy's *Confessions of an Advertising Man*, Seibert promised himself to stay out of the business. But having gone back to square one countless times since, he now gives the book to prospective clients. □

Back in the day getting a write-up in the New York Times or Adweek advertising column could make an agency's reputation. We were lucky a few times to have captured the attention of both.

Over the years, we never got all that much press, but it was just as well.

For better and worse, we felt –as they say– like the quality of our work spoke for itself.

Fred and Alan Love Lucy

Fred Seibert and Alan Goodman, who make "I Want My MTV" ads and Nick at Nite's retro posters, live where Mr. Ed meets Patty Duke, where kitsch equals rich

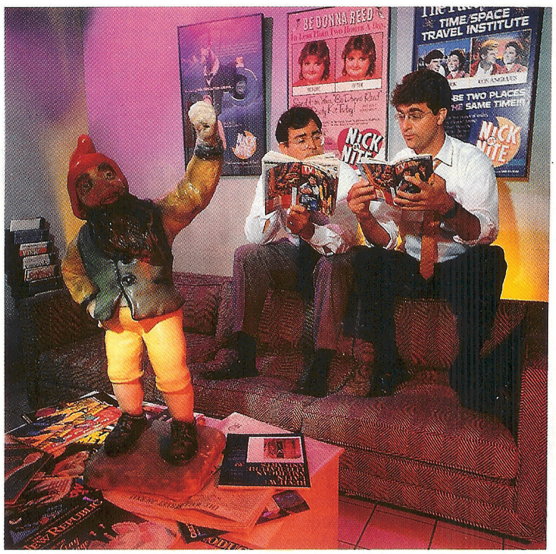
BY JUDITH NEWMAN

JANET PAPARAZZO doesn't like being dropped on her head. Not one bit. By the thirteenth take of the day for this MTV commercial, the twenty-foot fall is getting kind of old.

"Just one more time, kids," pleads the director. "I'll get you out of there, I promise."

Fred Seibert, thirty-seven, and Alan Goodman, thirty-six, founders and partners of the advertising agency Fred/Alan Inc., watch intently from the sidelines. Alan thoughtfully pushes his glasses back when they slip down his nose. Fred, wearing similar frames, checks his Elvis watch occasionally to make sure everything's copacetic. Both are dressed casually—Seibert in khakis and a white oxford shirt, Goodman sporting his Miami Beach–meets–*Miami Vice* twill jacket and salmon sweatshirt. Watching them together, one cannot help humming an insidious little theme song from one of the reruns they've helped popularize on Nick at Nite: "They laugh alike, they walk alike, at times they even talk alike. . . ."

While the $150,000 commercial being filmed today may be a bargain-basement job by industry standards, it's not small change to Fred/Alan Inc.—nor to their client, MTV, which will be using it to advertise on other television networks. It took some fast talking to convince the MTV people that it was worth the effort to construct an upside-down set and drop the talent from the ceiling, rather than simply to switch the image around through video editing. What seemed a minor and expensive detail would, according to Fred and Alan, determine the success or failure of the spot.



Alan Goodman and Fred Seibert: ad men for whom TV is their trusted guide.

Janet, the stuntwoman, carefully climbs back into her rig. She greets her MTV-watching husband, a gymnast who's been hired for his ability not to pass out when suspended upside down for long periods of time. The TV set on the ceiling suddenly comes loose from its moorings, showering the "normal" TV-watching couple below with a cloud of dust. The wife on the ceiling suddenly realizes she's upside down, drops on her head into the home of Mr. and Mrs. Boring below, stands up, points to the television, and whines the now infamous tag line:

"I WANT MY MTV."

Cut. Applause from the crew. "Looks great," shouts the director. The MTV account executive hugs the executive producer. "Chris, you did it, you big Swedish gummy bear."

Fred beams. Alan pushes his glasses back on his face.

"Hey, I don't know what it means," Alan shrugs. "But it's right for the client, and it works."

Fred, normally the one who talks strategy, targeting, and numbers, has left his thinking cap back at the office. "This is some tricky shit," he exclaims happily.

Which pretty much sums up the work of Fred/Alan Inc.

Founded in 1983, the company has grown from a three-person operation producing on-air promos, sales films, and network identifications for MTV to a forty-one-person agency with $31 million in billings; a hip, entertainment-based client list that includes Nickelodeon, Nick at Nite, VH-1, and Mosaic Records; and a hot market niche. They define themselves as "youth advertisers," experts at speaking the (musical, visual) language

Judith Newman is a New York–based freelance writer.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BENNO FRIEDMAN

Manhattan, inc. magazine February 1990
(It's really hard to believe the cover of this issue. It was even depressing back in the day.)

Fred and Alan, whose office bathrooms are labeled Lucy and Ricky, were raised amid the lawn sprinklers and quality aluminum siding of suburbia: having mainlined TV since they were tots, their extended families include June and Ward, Darrin and Samantha, Archie and Edith, Gilligan—and the Skipper too.

of the hard-to-persuade forty-and-under boomer audiences—Baby Bust (1962–73) and Baby Boomlet (1973 to the present)—that account for about 58 percent of the U.S. population. These are the folks who have mainlined television since they were tots, whose extended families included June and Ward, Darrin and Samantha, Archie and Edith, Gilligan—and the Skipper too. The market is a potential gold mine for anyone savvy enough to speak this audience's television-inspired language. It's a language in which Fred/Alan is fluent.

Fred Seibert and Alan Goodman told us we wanted our MTV. (They worked with Lois Pon Gershon—now Lois/GGK—who just happen to be the same people who came up with "I want my Maypo" during the sixties.) The boys also helped make Nick at Nite, the programming format on Nickelodeon that airs only reruns ("Please, not reruns—classics," cries Goodman), a household name in New York.

If the company has a trademark style, it's that virtually everything coming out of their shop refers to the small screen. Their appeal to fifties and sixties nostalgia, their trash and flash, their use of dizzying graphics and music that goes straight to the gut has been copied endlessly. Forget market research. Forget focus groups. More than any other agency, they hit the consumer where he really lives—the mental landscape of his childhood.

It's a transitional time for the agency. An attempt to show they had what it takes to bring America's tube heads to the printed word failed: after winning the prestigious Harcourt Brace Jovanovich account in early 1989, they were out the door by year's end. Then again, a match with a more recent publishing client—*Sassy*, a magazine that, for all its "relevancy" to teenagers, doesn't exactly presume an audience destined for 800s on their SATs—looks much more promising. And for all their iconoclasm, Fred/Alan wants to prove that pitching products to the babies isn't kid stuff; they very much want the chance to try out their methods on parity products—the dog food–and-detergent set, an area of advertising that they believe will open up new doors for the Patty and Kathy of the industry.

Fred talks, Alan broods. Fred expands on an idea, Alan summarizes it in four words. But both agree on why their campaigns for their media clients have been so successful. It comes back to the child in us all, our innate need to believe in an idea or a product. Part of Fred and Alan's genius is in exploiting our faith in logos—and having fun in the process.

"See, we're a trademark-, brand-driven company," says Fred, whose office houses an enormous Flying A billboard from Tydol and dozens of original packages—milk cartons and so forth—from the fifties and sixties. "Behind a trademark there's intrinsic value. Coca-Cola means something. McDonald's means something. MTV means something—which is why people would wear MTV T-shirts. How many people do you see wearing an NBC T-shirt? Ted Turner created value with his Superstation. We did it for MTV, Nickelodeon, and now, we hope, VH-1." Because television networks have no brand identity, according to Seibert and Goodman, they are unable to create loyalty among their viewers. "The point is we've created brand loyalty for networks, which were formerly not thought of in terms of 'brands,' and we think you can do that with any product," says Fred.

If ad revenues are any indication, Seibert has a point. While the major networks continue to lose share at a steady pace, the MTV channels (now owned by Viacom) continue to increase revenue and siphon audiences away. According to Paul Kagan Associates, an independent research firm, MTV revenue, after several rocky years, is up $11 million, from $78 million in 1988 to $89 million in 1989. Nickelodeon's revenue has increased steadily and in 1989 took a substantial jump, from $27 million to $41 million—partially the result of many more homes' receiving the station. Even VH-1, which since its inception in 1985 has been the problem child of the networks, may finally be coming into its own; under Fred/Alan's guidance (in addition to handling advertising, they act as consultants), the station has reconstructed its programming to focus on the older boomer, and sales have gone from $6.4 million in 1987 to $18.1 million in 1989.

Yet the networks continue to ignore these stations as competition—hence NBC, ABC, and Fox are allowing MTV to advertise on their airwaves. CBS alone seems to have spotted the enemy and will not air MTV commercials.

Marshall Cohen, who worked closely with Fred and Alan when they were at MTV and is now executive vice president for corporate affairs and communications at MTV Networks, believes in Fred/Alan's talent in creating identity and brand loyalty. "The biggest thing we have going for us is how we communicate with our viewers," says Cohen, who adds that Fred/Alan will be developing HA! the TV Comedy Network, MTV's new comedy channel. "Fred/Alan has helped us take raw concepts—names and logos—and make them come alive on TV."

To Fred and Alan growing up, TV was life. The boys, whose office bathrooms are labeled Lucy and Ricky, were raised amid the lawn sprinklers and quality aluminum siding of suburbia. Both were fanatic TV watchers. "I worried that Fred would never live up to his potential," says his mother, Lilliana.

Both were also musical. Alan played trumpet, and Fred played electric keyboards in a high school band with a name only someone deeply into puberty could love—the Neglected Few. They met at Columbia University while working for WKCR, the college radio station. "At that time we weren't at all alike," says Fred. "Except that we both had this insatiable curiosity. It cemented our friendship."

By their own admission, they've grown more alike over the years ("Alan was fat, I was skinny . . . now I've gained weight, and he's lost"), but they like to attribute their compatibility to certain key differences. "The important thing is that we don't eat any of the same foods," Alan deadpans. "And I live at the southernmost tip of Manhattan, and Fred lives at the northernmost." But as for their lives being intertwined, well, just ask Fred's sister, Elena. She's been living with Alan for more than ten years.

After college the boys went their separate ways professionally. Alan took his film training and landed a researching job at *Consumer Reports*, which produced consumer mini-spots for local TV stations "that didn't have their own Betty Furness." Later he became head copy-

writer at CBS Records. Fred got into the music business as a recording engineer, at which he was, by his own report, "astoundingly unsuccessful."

They were united again in 1980 at Warner Amex Satellite Entertainment Company, where Fred had been hired to come up with an image for this kicky new television channel that would play only music videos. "When I first told Fred about MTV, he said, "God, that's an idiotic idea, but sure, I'll do it," recalls Bob Pittman, the man credited with mass-marketing the music video format. (Pittman is now president and CEO of Quantum Media.) "If it weren't for Fred hiring young, fresh, innovative, and cheap people to work for us, the station never would have gotten off the ground." Among that cheap labor was Alan Goodman, who eventually became creative director of WASEC, MTV's former parent company.

"So there we were," says Seibert, "these two kids with no advertising experience, and we were doing everything—promotion, production, programming, and advertising." (They've brought this no-labels approach to their own business—at Fred/Alan the account managers can, and do, write copy.)

Their mission was to come up with the "visual grammar" that would represent this new concept in programming. "We had no money. Nothing," explains Seibert. So first the image had to be cheap. And it had to convey something about the pioneering spirit of the new channel. Finally, it had to represent a seminal experience of the audience Warner envisioned for MTV—something as memorable to the under-twenty-five crowd as newsreels of boys going off to fight World War II had been to their parents. Marcy Brafman, one of the "art monsters" (as Pittman called them) who worked for Fred, found out that NASA footage of men landing on the moon was in the public domain. "So we stole it," explains Fred.

The success of this logo taught them a lesson they still practice today—for reaching youth, expensive isn't necessarily better. "We're big believers in man-in-the-street advertising—chintzy, stupid stuff," says Fred. "If people who remind you of you and your neighbors recommend something, it's often much more convincing than using some obvious actor."

While none of the images that have come from Fred/Alan since have had the lasting impact of the spacemen planting an MTV flag on the moon, the company has been responsible for several campaigns that have acquired cult status. The most recent has been the brilliant series for Nick at Nite, dreamed up by Noel Frankel, Fred/Alan's creative director. (Frankel, incidentally, is the man

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who created a now famous monster: as a freelance art director, he had the bright idea of featuring Leona Helmsley in all the Helmsley Hotel ads.) The campaign promotes the reruns indirectly by making the ads hawk dopey, nonexistent products like the My Three Sons Legs Lawn Sculpture, Mr. Ed's After Shave, and the Patty Duke Time/Space Travel Institute ("Be Two Places at the Same Time!!!").

As Fred/Alan's first-rate copywriter, Steve Diamond, says, "I used to try to make things too smart. Noel would sit me down and say, 'Don't worry. Just be dumb.' Noel's taught me to be stupider."

Seibert and Alan are also fond of attributing the company's success to Fred's personal credo: Have fun. Make money. Stand the people you work with. "When we've veered away from that law, we've gotten into trouble," says Fred. Case in point: Fred/Alan's experience with the now canceled *USA Today on TV*. They dropped their biggest client in 1989 because they simply couldn't get their ideas through the company bureaucracy.

Says Bob Jacobs, the president of GTG Marketing, which handled *USA Today*: "These guys are very good, but they're very specialized. We needed something that wasn't so heavy on concept, which was a little more episodic and news-oriented. I don't think they want to do this sort of stuff."

> Virtually everything coming out of their shop refers in some way to the small screen.

Fred and Alan, who chat happily about virtually anything, become a tad sulky when *USA Today* is mentioned. In sixteen weeks the *USA Today* people rejected four major campaigns.

"Working on that show was like throwing a bomb into the company," says Fred. "We were making money, but we were neglecting my other two rules. It nearly tore us apart." They've since recouped from this trauma but believe it proved once again the truth of an observation made by Fred Allen, the radio personality who inspired their company's name: "The minds that control TV are so small you could put them in the navel of a flea and still have room for the heart of a network vice president."

Then there's HBJ. Apparently the suits over there felt the guys who dreamed up the Danny Thomas Spitting Contest (to promote the show on Nickelodeon) could add a little life to their ultraconservative industry.

But HBJ got more life than they bargained for. Daphne Merkin, an associate publisher and vice president at Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, recalls the time that Fred/Alan developed an ad she loved for *Forty-Seventeen*, a new novel by Frank Moorhouse. The ad used the word "slut" and involved phrasing deemed unprintable by the *New York Times*'s Advertising Acceptability Department. Fred/Alan didn't know they wouldn't approve the ad, and it couldn't be run in the *Times*.

Leigh Haber, HBJ's director of advertising and publicity, tactfully noted that "opening up a package from Fred/Alan is like seeing a Christmas present; you never know what you're going to get. That can be good or bad. Some people will say, 'This is great.' Some will be shocked."

Merkin is a little less diplomatic. "They're used to talking to a very young audience, but in publishing, you're not always trying to lure eighteen-year-olds." (Yet, counters Fred/Alan, that's precisely what they were hired for.) "And they're just used to working in a glitzier industry. I'm not sure how much they actually read."

BRITTANY HAIFA LAHAINA WATERFORD BALI NICE SYDNEY TANGIER JUNEAU LENINGRAD NAWILIWILI LISBON VANCOUVER LIVORNO PE

EY DUBLIN VENICE VILLEFRANCHE HALIFAX

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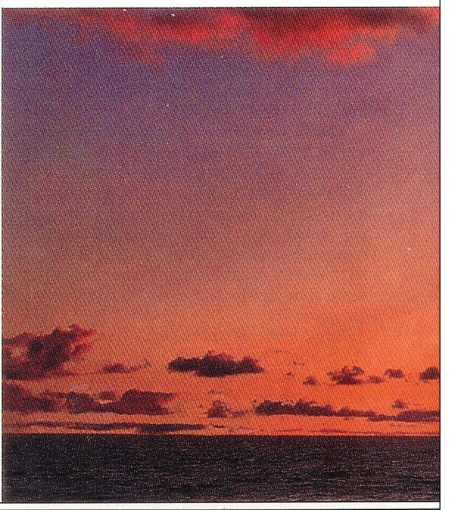

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ROYAL VIKING STAR

PLAYA DEL CARMEN NAPLES MANILA KETCHIKAN LAS PALMAS OCHO RIOS MELBOURNE PUERTO VALLARTA SHANGHAI CARTAGENA BRIS

Bahamian Registry

"Considering that Alan is a writer and I spend more money on books than anything else except rent, I find the implication deeply offensive," says Fred. He also notes that while HBJ has moved on to Della Femina, Fred/Alan inherited a Random House project Della Femina had before they lost the entire Random House account—the new Robert Ludlum novel. "Daphne thought she was looking for something different than what Sussman & Sugar and Franklin Spier [the advertising agencies that specialize in publishing and have a virtual stranglehold on the industry] offered. But basically she didn't want to break the mold. She has no notion of what advertising is."

"We just don't think publishing houses and ad agencies are a good fit on a day-to-day basis," Fred adds. "Except for big consumer books, we think advertising in publishing is best handled in-house."

While the transition from writing promos for the new Whitesnake video to writing ad copy for *Letters to Nabokov* wasn't exactly smooth sailing, things are looking up with the brand-new pairing of Fred/Alan and *Sassy*. Associate publisher Linda Cohen is willing to say no more than "we're really excited to be working with them"; but Fred speaks with somewhat more passion. "*Sassy* is the best publication in the country," he says. Alarmingly, he means it. "They've done what we call in TV breaking the fourth wall; they have a real, ongoing dialogue with their readers." Even if that dialogue is written in the conversational style of a gum-snapping eleven-year-old and deals with such weighty subjects as "Embarrassing Moments in our Menstrual History"? "They're completely tuned in to what teenagers care about," Fred maintains.

> They tell America's junk-obsessed kids precisely what kind of junk to read and drink.

Sassy is just one result of their recent new client-recruitment effort. "We're making like Darrin Stevens," says Seibert. "Going out, showing our stuff, shaking hands. 'Hi, I'm from McMann And Tate.' " Their dream: to take the worst product in the world, and show what they could do with the right positioning and right point of view.

They may just get their wish with another new client: Barq's Inc., makers of Delaware Punch, a popular southern fruit concoction virtually unknown in the East, as well as the country's second-ranked root beer. "After Coke and Pepsi and all the brands they own, there's not much else out there. We're just incredibly thrilled to be doing our stuff with a soft drink." A drink that folks in Fred/Alan's office call 'the red stuff.' "

But while they tell America's junk-obsessed kids precisely what junk to read and drink, Fred Seibert and Alan Goodman are doing something remarkably unadolescent: preparing for the future. "When you get older in this business, sometimes you lose it," says Fred. "We'll burn out, we may not be thinking young anymore. And we don't want to find ourselves in a situation where all we can do later is cash out." Fred and Alan are therefore pouring their bucks into an asset-based business—a television production company that has already produced several specials for Nickelodeon, Nick at Nite, and MTV and, teamed with King World, is bringing a pilot of a comedy talk show to this year's NAPTE conference.

Kitsch, however, is never too far from their minds. The company is called Chauncey Street Productions. Remember where Ralph and Alice lived in *The Honeymooners*? Fred and Alan do. Ⓜ

TH MYKONOS KUALA LUMPUR NEW YORK OSLO PIRAEUS LONDON PAPEETE BORDEAUX SYRACUSE WHITTIER HAMBURG BANGKOK QUEBEC

HALFWAY BETWEEN MANHATTAN AND BERMUDA,
AN ENCHANTED ISLAND THAT BOASTS THE BEST OF BOTH.

ST. THOMAS VICTORIA WELLINGTON GIBRALTAR ST. MAARTEN CONSTANTA MACAPA

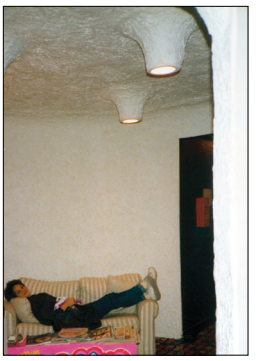
NE ST. NAZAIRE CALDERA SOUTHAMPTON MAUI PICTON FORT-DE-FRANCE SANTAREM CAPRI SAN BLAS ISLANDS BOMBAY SINGAPORE ROME

© Royal Viking Line 1989

Fred/Alan co-workers were smarter, prettier, and more fun than we were. Their hard work was only the beginning. We were all serious people who never took ourselves seriously.

Top: Albie Hecht
Clockwise staring top left: Mike Shavelson; Nancy Nalven; Tom Leonardis; Tom Pomposello & Marietta Szubski; Rie Koko; Chris Strand & Jeffrey Beer; Tom Leonardis; Fred Seibert

Fred/Alan & Chauncey Street
870 7th Avenue
Manhattan, New York 1987



Top: Jessica Wolf
Clockwise from top left:
Ed Levine; Janet Gutyan, Marietta Szubski, Nancy, Lori Jacobsen, Barbara Powers; Len Fischman & Alan Goodman; Lori Jacobsen; Marisel; Elliot Krowe; Noel Frankel; Chris Strand

Photographs by Elena Seibert

Jim Spegman
Paul Buckley

Mrs. & Mr. Noel Frankel

Paula Brinkman

Paula Brinkman, Carol Forsythe, Marietta Szubski

Christine Ecklund, Fred, Scott Webb

Jessica Wolf, Melissa Kurnit, Christine Ecklund

Jessica Wolf

Gilbert Hsiao
Ray Meola

Fred/Alan & Chauncey Street retreat
Shelter Island & Southhold, summer 1989

Alan and Fred

Paula Brinkman, Carol Forsythe, Marietta Szubski

Fred & Carol Forsythe

Christine Ecklund, Magda Liolis

Chris & Baby Strand

Dave Landesberg

Laurie & Micky Hyman

Robert Hunter

Half the Fred/Alan staff

Bill Burnett

Ed Levine.
Vicki Bijur, Baby Strand, Albie Hecht

Paul Brinkman, Dave Landesberg

Albie Hecht, Nelson Heumann, Lou Baur

Bob & JuneAnn Zeltman

Yvette Yasui

Kay Sarlin, Melissa Kurnit

Fred/Alan & Chauncey Street retreat
Shelter Island & Southhold, summer 1989

Kenny & Mrs. Kenny

Paula Brinkman & Dave Landesberg

Dave & Amy Landesberg & Nancy Bacher

Fred & Troy Ellen Dixon

Bridget, Elliot & Cassie Krowe

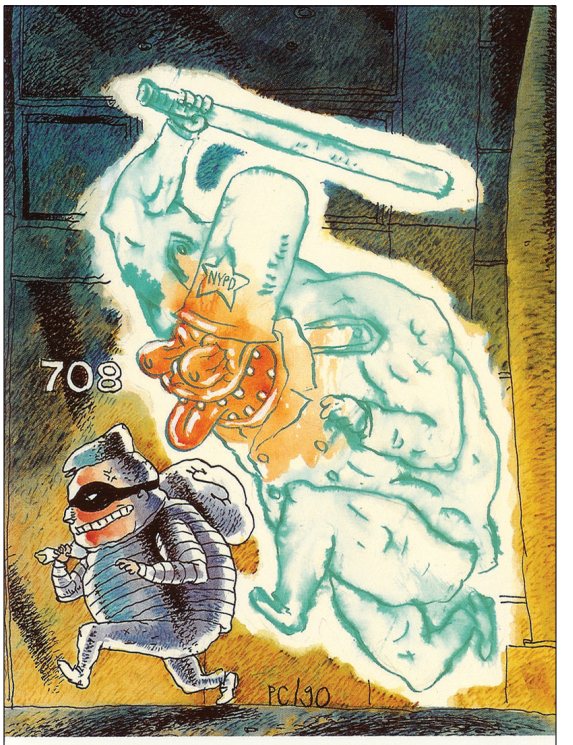
Ray Meola, Robert Hunter, NancyBacher, Bill Burnett

Ed & Will Levine

Pierce & Carol Forsythe

We pass through Columbus Circle, where...
The statue of Christopher Columbus spent 1990 undergoing an extensive facelift. We half-expected it to turn into "Sophia Loren Circle" in 1991, but no such luck. Sigh...

Illustrated by Donna J. Pallotta



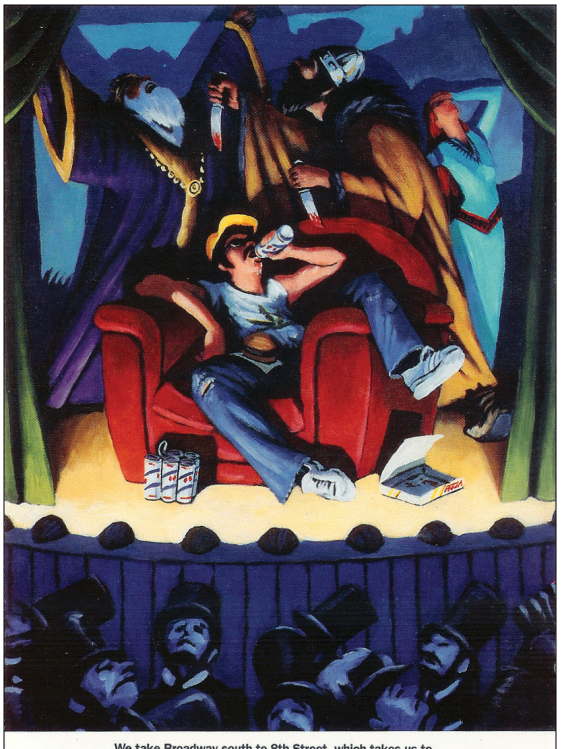
Right on Astor Place, then down Broadway to our new offices...
708 Broadway, where on moonlit nights you can sometimes see the ghost of **Clubber Williams**, the cop from the 1870s who took the word "beat" literally. He was renowned for having a fight a day. But don't worry—we greased Clubber's palm before we moved in. At least we *think* that palm was Clubber's...

Illustrated by Paul Corio

W61ST
TAXI
ALAN: Look! A storyboard artist is drawing us!
ALBIE: Hey mistuh! Can we be in your commercial?
FRED: Theoretically, this gesture should get us a cab...
ALBIE: Care for some champagne?

When Fred/Alan Inc. and Chauncey Street Productions moved from W. 61st Street to our new downtown offices at 708 Broadway, we discovered that the road south was littered with fascinating tidbits of arcane New York history.

Illustrated by John Resi

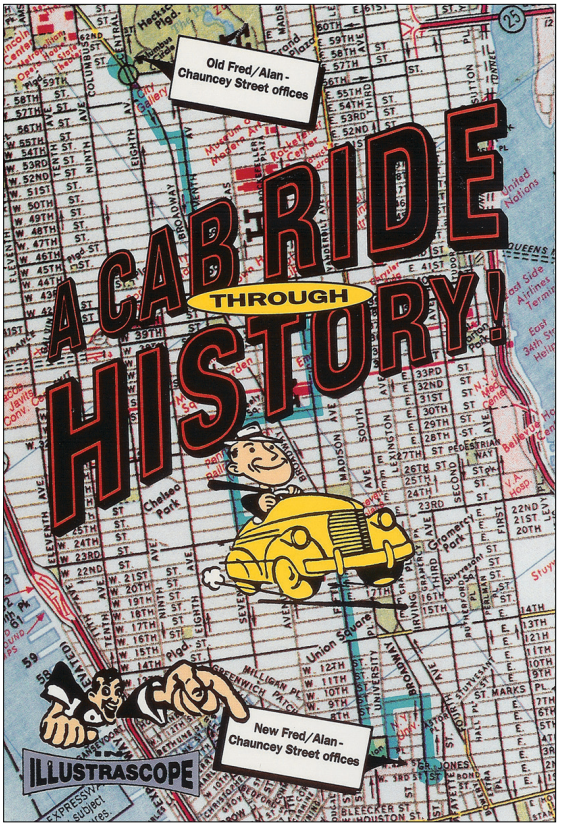


We take Broadway south to 8th Street, which takes us to...
Astor Place, where in 1849 the Astor Place Riots erupted over whether Macbeth should be portrayed by an American or a British actor.
(The answer is obvious, isn't it?)

Illustrated by Mike Oldroyd

Fred/Alan made our third and final move –from 870 7th Avenue to 16 West 61st Street to 708 Broadway *(pages 350-355)*, all in Manhattan– late in 1991. We decided to go all out.

Our moving announcement was emblematic of the approach the company used on all our best projects. Twelve talented artists and illustrators contributed



Postcard package/ moving annoucement

their own unique styles in the fold-out postcard set we sent to our clients and friends.

Then, architect Yossi Friedman was given a blank canvas when it was clear our new location needed to be gutted and rebuilt to accommodate a space that was actually two buildings connected by a narrow walkway.

It was, by far, the nicest working environment we'd had, a testament to the great work all of our brilliant teams had done over the years.

7th Avenue –our cheapest space of the decade– was at the top of a mid-level Manhattan hotel, only accessible by, first, walking through the hotel elevator, then taking the hotel elevator. Getting off at the top floor, there was a tiny – really small– elevator that went to the "tower," a warren of rooms whose tenant history included the production company of popular actor, comedian, writer, and composer Jackie Gleason ("The Great One"). It was "decorated" with carpet remnants of each of the pop art rugs from each hotel floor. And, ceiling lights in the circular, stucco coated reception area were enclosed in stalactites. *(See pages 21.)*

Moving a few blocks to 61st kept us close to our MTV Networks clients – our biggest and most lucrative. And the client who afforded us the most creative freedom– and was easy to get to for most of our co-workers. And there was no need to have to explain the complicated access to visitors. We'd taken it over from a TV movie production company, and aside from the bigger footprint we needed to welcome our growing staff, compared to the hotel it was gorgeous and "professional." But, it was still someone else's home, and we had to adapt ourselves to their vision of work.

708 Broadway was all ours. Clean, modern in an 1980s kind of way, we felt we'd finally grown up. Little did we know what a short time we'd spend there.

We drive south on 5th to…
Washington Square. This center of beatnik and hippie bohemia was once the site of public hangings. It also served time as a potter's field, where impoverished New Yorkers were put in unmarked graves. Loose joints, indeed.

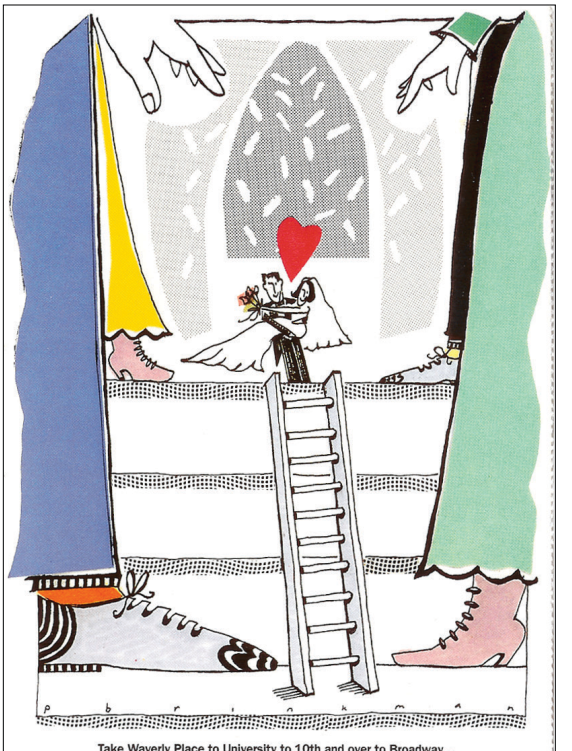
Illustrated by Bob Fortier

Turning left again on 7th Avenue we head south…
On 25th Street stood the notorious *Sister's Row*, where seven sisters from New England ran their seven separate houses of ill repute. Composers! Librettists! This cries out to be a Broadway show.
"Seven Brides for Seven Brothels"—it's got hit written all over it!

Illustrated by Ray Domingo

We head back to Broadway/Fifth Avenue 23rd Street where…
We breeze past the famous *Flatiron Building*. It created gusts of wind so strong that men would gather to watch the ladies' skirts fly up. Cops sent to clear the intersection coined the well-known phrase "23 Skiddoo".

Illustrated by Leslie Cabarga

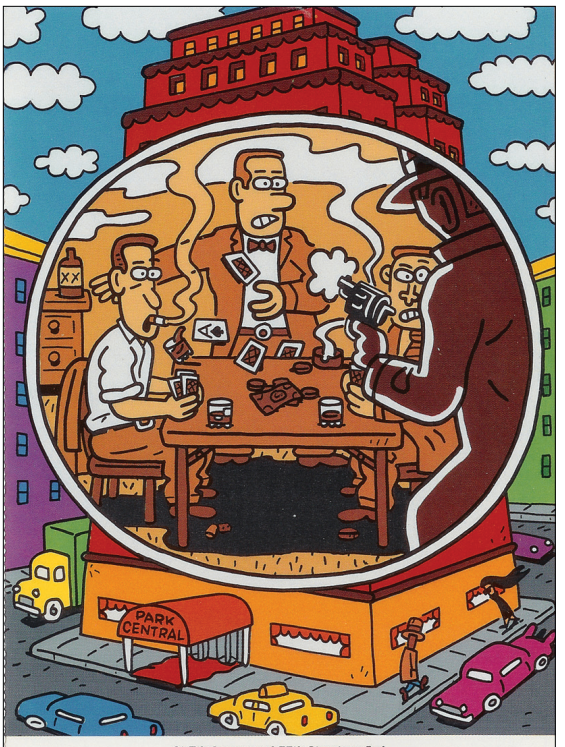


Take Waverly Place to University to 10th and over to Broadway…
Here stands *Grace Church*, where P. T. Barnum staged the marriage of the midget Tom Thumb and his tiny bride Lavinia Warren. Barnum was known for staging spectaculars, but this time it was a small affair.

Illustrated by Paula Brinkman

Continuing south we turn left at 42nd Street. The space behind the library, now occupied by Bryant Park, was once the site of…
The Crystal Palace, one of the most opulent buildings the city has ever seen. It burned down in a spectacular fire in 1858.

Illustrated by Mike Quon



At 7th Avenue and 55th Street we find…
The *Omni Park Central Hotel*, former headquarters of Jackie Gleason, Fred Allen, and Fred/Alan. This was also the place where famed gangland leader Arnold Rothstein had *his* headquarters splattered all over the walls.

Illustrated by Joey Ahlbum

We turn right on 33rd for a quick but rewarding detour to see…
154 W. 33rd—the place where the world's first toilet paper was invented. And the world heaved a sigh of relief.

Illustrated by David Burd

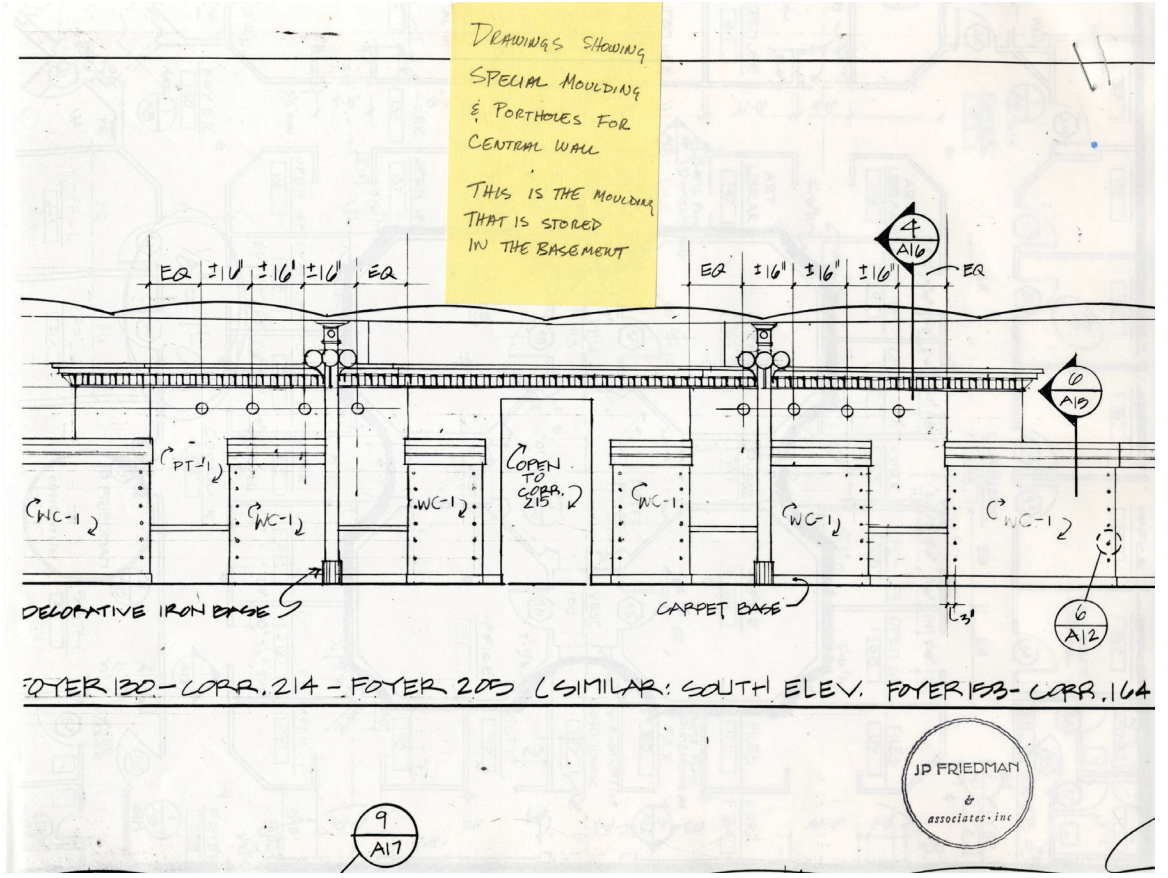
We turn right onto 5th, and at 34th Street we gawk like tourists at…
The Empire State Building, where a wayward bomber once crash-landed. The pilot apparently thought he was coming down at La Guardia. "Ladies and gentlemen, if you look directly in front of the plane you'll see the famed Empire State B…"

Illustrated by Drew Hodges

HA!
TV COMEDY NETWORK™
HA!
HA!
V COMEDY NETWORK™

Fred/Alan's last office
708 Broadway 8th floor
Manhattan, New York City

Fred/Alan's last office
708 Broadway 8th floor
Manhattan, New York City


DRAWINGS SHOWING SPECIAL MOULDING & PORTHOLES FOR CENTRAL WALL
THIS IS THE MOULDING THAT IS STORED IN THE BASEMENT
EQ ±10" ±16" ±16" EQ
EQ ±16" ±16" ±16" EQ
4 A16
6 A18
6 A12
PT-1
WC-1
OPEN TO CORR. 215
DECORATIVE IRON BASE
CARPET BASE
9 A17
FOYER 130 – CORR. 214 – FOYER 205 (SIMILAR: SOUTH ELEV. FOYER 153 – CORR. 164
JP FRIEDMAN & associates · inc

Time to go...

A very special invitation to some especially special people on an exceptionally special occasion.

The end came fast, but it was due. And, of course, there were myriad reasons. The two of us never meant to be in the branding and advertising business. We –Fred, Alan, and all our fabulous colleagues– were always excited about the work and felt like we did some great stuff. However, the clients, the business environment, and our personal ambitions led us elsewhere. Most of our great staff landed well –we still work with a bunch of them!– and now that it's all over we can look back and feel proud of the friends we all continue to be and the contributions everyone made.

The party was over, except for the last one. It was a blast.

Fred Seibert and Alan Goodman
would like to cordially invite everyone

AGGHH! DAMMIT, GET THIS CHICKEN OFF MY NECK!

..Ahem...
would like to invite everyone who ever worked for Fred/Alan to attend a gala

I TOLD YOU TO KEEP THE GOATS OUT OF HERE!
CAN'T THESE OFFICE FARMERS AT LEAST WAIT TILL
WE'VE HAD OUR CLOSING PARTY???

to attend a gala The Party's Over Party,
featuring cheese and crackers and seltzer and peanuts — the works!

IF THAT GUY CLEM ASKS ME ONE MORE TIME IF IT'S OKAY TO START SPREADIN' THE TOPSOIL, I'M GONNA BRAIN HIM. WRITING THIS IS TOUGH ENOUGH WITHOUT THESE BOZOS IN OVERALLS BREATHING DOWN MY NECK.

It will truly be a once-in-a-lifetime chance to say hello, say goodbye, reminisce, rekindle old friendships, reopen old wounds, get snockered and sing the Fred/Alan anthem one last time. (Please bring your copy of the sheet music, as we don't have enough to go around.)

The great Fred/Alan The Party's Over Party will be held at
708 Broadway, 8th floor
Wednesday, May 27, 6-9 pm
R S V P Carol Forsythe–212-598-9700

See you th-

NO, YOU CAN'T PUT THE SCARECROW IN HERE
— NOT WHILE I'M CREATIVE DIRECTOR!

See you there!

GOODBYE

JUNE 1992

Photography by Elena Seibert

We all worked hard. We also partied enthusiastically. Our Christmas parties (*pages 305-309*) are still remembered for the outrageous locations and over-the-top musical talent we booked. We also made a point of holding our parties a week or so before MTV's holiday party so everyone would be talking about ours.

But when it was time to close the doors for the last time, we didn't invite clients or prospects. We no longer needed to promote the company. This last party was to thank the many Fred/Alan-ers through the years –employees and collaborators– who had helped us achieve substantial attention for once-marginal accounts with near-empty pockets.

More than 30 years after we said goodbye, these faces bring smiles and fond memories. Fred/Alan was a special place because of special people. It was one small decade in time, but the impact was significant and the gratitude is indelible.

Alan & Jim Burns

Robert Hunter, Chris Strand, Eileen & Tom Barreca

Albie Hecht & Mark Tomizawa

Fred & Daria McLean

Jessica Wolf & Melissa Kurnit

Barbara Powers & Tom Pomposello

Gilbert Hsiao & Richard Koenigsberg

Carol Forsythe

Mara Marich & Fred

Tom Godici & Alan

Albie Hecht, Ed Levine, Melissa Kurnit

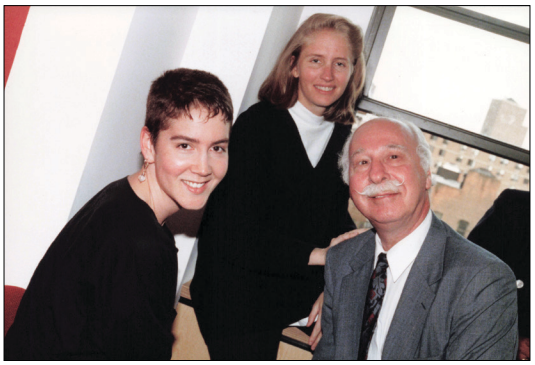
Juneanne Zeltman & Jill Gershon

Kenny Murphy

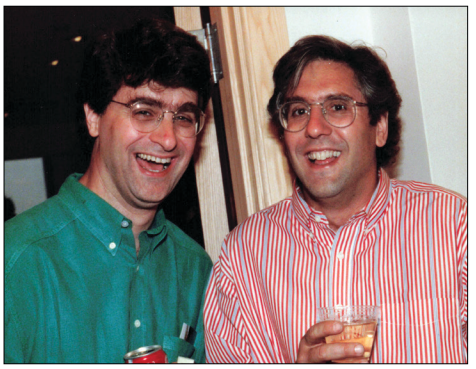
Linda Schaffer, Adam Sargis Steve Shepard

David Burd & Jessica Wolf

Carol Forsythe & Fred



Paula Brinkman, Lou Bauer, Len Fischman

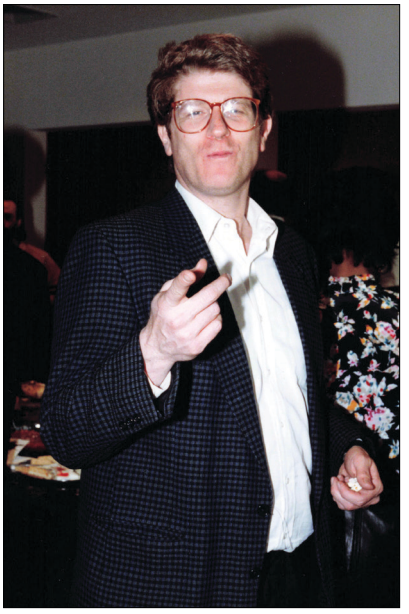


Fred & Albie Hecht

Len Fischman, Dave Landesberg, Ray Meola

Albie Hecht, Chris Strand, Robert Small, Chris Koch

Gilbert Hsiao & Daria McLean



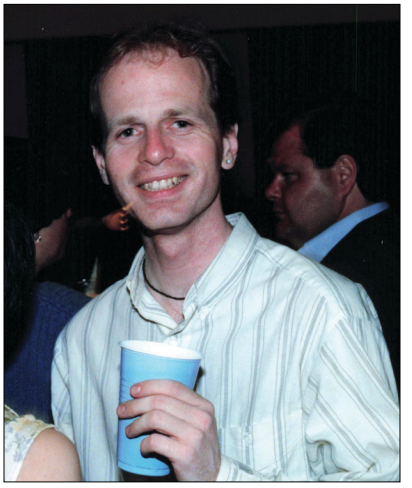
Ed Levine

Marty Pekar, David Burd

Paulette McCarron & Bob Zeltman

Scott Webb & Troy Ellen Dixon

Bill Horvath



Norm Magnussen & Alan

Richard Koenigsberg

Steve Diamond

Alan, Roy Langbord, Fred

Melissa Kurnit, Albie Hecht, Magda Liolis

Marty Pekar & Fred

Linda Schaffer & Noel Frankel

Honest Tom Pomposello

Troy Ellen Dixon, Yvette Yasui

Nancy Nalven & Ed Levine, authors

Paula Brinkman & Alan

There were a lot of folks who were surprised when Fred/Alan announced it was shutting down. And it was probably those in the marketing and ad industry who were most shocked, since it was the beginning of the era of agency mergers and consolidation.

Why would a "hot" company like Fred/Alan close, when there were untold riches to be made by selling the shop to a public, giant agency roll-up?

One of our champions in the press, Adweek's Richard Morgan, had written a glowing piece about Fred/Alan just three years before (*page 330*) and gave us as nice a professional send off as any company could have wanted. Who knows how long it had taken Richard to figure out a legitimate way to quote The Who in a headline?

The notion of doing what we'd been doing for a decade for five or ten more years just wasn't appealing. We'd done some groundbreaking, innovative work, and OK... some not as special, and we were extremely proud of what had been accomplished. And, if we did say so ourselves, we felt like we'd treated our clients with the best we had in us. Maybe most of all, we hoped that our co-workers felt the same way.

We just didn't have it in us anymore.

ADWEEK®

MTV AGENCY ELECTS TO DIE BEFORE IT GETS OLD

MORGAN AT LARGE

BY RICHARD MORGAN

Fred/Alan, the New York agency behind the MTV look, is closing down this Friday for a myriad of reasons. Co-founder Fred Seibert found himself too interested to reject all nonagency opportunities, such as the president's job he recently accepted at Hanna-Barbera. Partner Alan Goodman, already doubling as the executive producer of the month-old *Hangin' with MTV* show, has other projects as well. Then, too, Fred/Alan had a knack for winning high-volume assignments from low-billing clients.

Mostly, though, Fred/Alan is closing because the agency business did not fulfill its promise—*as advertised.*

"About a year ago," Seibert explains, "we came to realize that the business we believed existed—you know, the business popularized in the lore and myth of advertising—was gone. We realized that in no way are agencies marketing partners anymore; they're creative vendors."

"And as an old-school agency," partner Goodman interrupts, "we no longer fit in. We're more the type that works so closely with clients we help invent their products. Even diseases, like athlete's foot, used to be created by agencies."

Everybody misses the good ol' days, but the exit of Fred/Alan, whose oldest partner is 40, is particularly disturbing. After working as the advertising department at MTV, Seibert and Goodman spun themselves free. They were at once seduced by their association with agencies while at MTV and intrigued by what they perceived to be a wide-open niche. Campaigns for Barq's, Swatch, Buf Puf and Nick at Nite followed, promising their shop a veritable lock on the youth market. Fred/Alan's youthful orientation was so convincing that three years ago I wrote:

"It's surprising something [like Fred/Alan] didn't happen sooner . . . . While boomers continue to move through life's timeline like the proverbial pig in a python, the original TV generation gives way to other TV generations. They'll have taken over, no doubt, at a time when big agencies are still stuck with leadership weaned on print."

I was, at best, half-right. As for the industry at large, Fred/Alan sees total denial. "Until two years ago," Seibert says, "the TV networks paid the same exorbitant amounts for their shows and ordered the same number of limos. Then they woke up and realized their world didn't exist anymore. Well, the agency business is going to wake up and realize that it, too, has been pretending."

Such is the future, as seen by Fred/Alan. It differs from conventional wisdom in that it attributes Madison Avenue's glorious past to a dearth of marketing skills at the client. It's rooted in a time when clients consisted of sales-and-manufacturing teams that let their agencies run wild. That all changed in the '60s, however, as clients took on marketing responsibilities themselves. "They no longer entrusted such an important function to an outside party," Seibert says.

Seibert contends the change was hardly noticed, obscured in part by the '60s creative revolution. Besides, who cared when the explosion in television rates served agencies as well as it served the networks? Agencies took marketing direction from clients almost as gladly as they took commissions.

Somewhere along the way, Seibert says, agencies became "no different than a free-lance writer/art director team. The client set a strategy and gave it to them, and they fulfilled it. If the client didn't like how they fulfilled it they gave it to another team. Then another. But that's not how a real partnership works." The agency/client relationship has since taken on so many vendor-like traits, Seibert adds, it's completely acceptable to "blow an agency off just because it doesn't take you skiing."

That's not to say there weren't clues along the way. For starters, Fred/Alan recalls producing 100 commercials a year before calling itself an agency. The principals, acting as strategic/creative consultants at the time, pitched all of their ideas without storyboards. "We'd simply go in and act it out, just like in those stupid old movies," Seibert says. But the day Fred/Alan changed its designation to agency, the same people at the same clients started demanding storyboards. "You're an agency now," they'd say.

Other clients, while pleased with Fred/Alan the consultancy, started looking for excuses to fire Fred/Alan the agency. It was, quite simply, their way with agencies. One went so far as to jettison the relationship immediately, citing his policy never to work with agencies. "For him," Seibert says, "an agency meant layers of bureaucratic nonsense."

Today, it's completely acceptable for a client to "blow an agency off just because it doesn't take you skiing."

As its leaves the business, still believing the function of advertising is as vital as ever (even if agencies aren't), Fred/Alan relishes shaking things up as much as it did. Wieden & Kennedy, the hottest shop going, admits openly to stealing from MTV, which in essence is stealing from Fred/Alan. The sad thing is that the optimism that continues to propel W&K is depleted at the source of influence. Of Fred/Alan's 30 disbanding workers, only one is seeking his next job in a traditional agency. ■

Jill Gershon was a Fred/Alan account executive in the late 80s, and she kindly decided to put on a party for those of us she could locate. The result was a wonderful time for all (though Fred had to leave early due to a severe allergic reaction to Jill's cats). We thought to commemorate the event with a small poster run for the attendees. Maybe it'll inspire another get together.

Fred/Alan loved posters, especially Fred, who collected (and still collects) more of them than was healthy. Any time we could come up with an excuse we made a poster. This one was a direct cop by the world famous Hatch Show Print in Nashville.

We'd spent a fair amount of time promoting ourselves; we had to get some new business after all. But, of course, like all creative companies we had a lot of cool things we wanted to do, and the best client for cool things is always yourselves.

FRIDAY MAY 21, 2004 6PM
THE CLIFTON HOUSE
127 W.79TH ST. @7D, NEW YORK
THANKS FOR COMING TO THE FIRST
FRED/ALAN
REUNION
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ELENA SEIBERT
HAND COLORING BY CANDY KUGEL
CREATED & PRODUCED BY
JILL GERSHON
Jill, Your thoughtfulness meant a lot to all of us. Thanks, Fred & Alan
COPYRIGHT ©2004 SNOW PRINT COMPANY ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Fred/Alan was blessed with dozens of incredible colleagues, whose work you've seen in these pages.

There are two, **Gilbert Hsiao** and **Jessica Wolf**, who were there for everyone in the joint every step of the way.

Thank you both, sincerely.

Did Fred/Alan ever have a Halloween party?

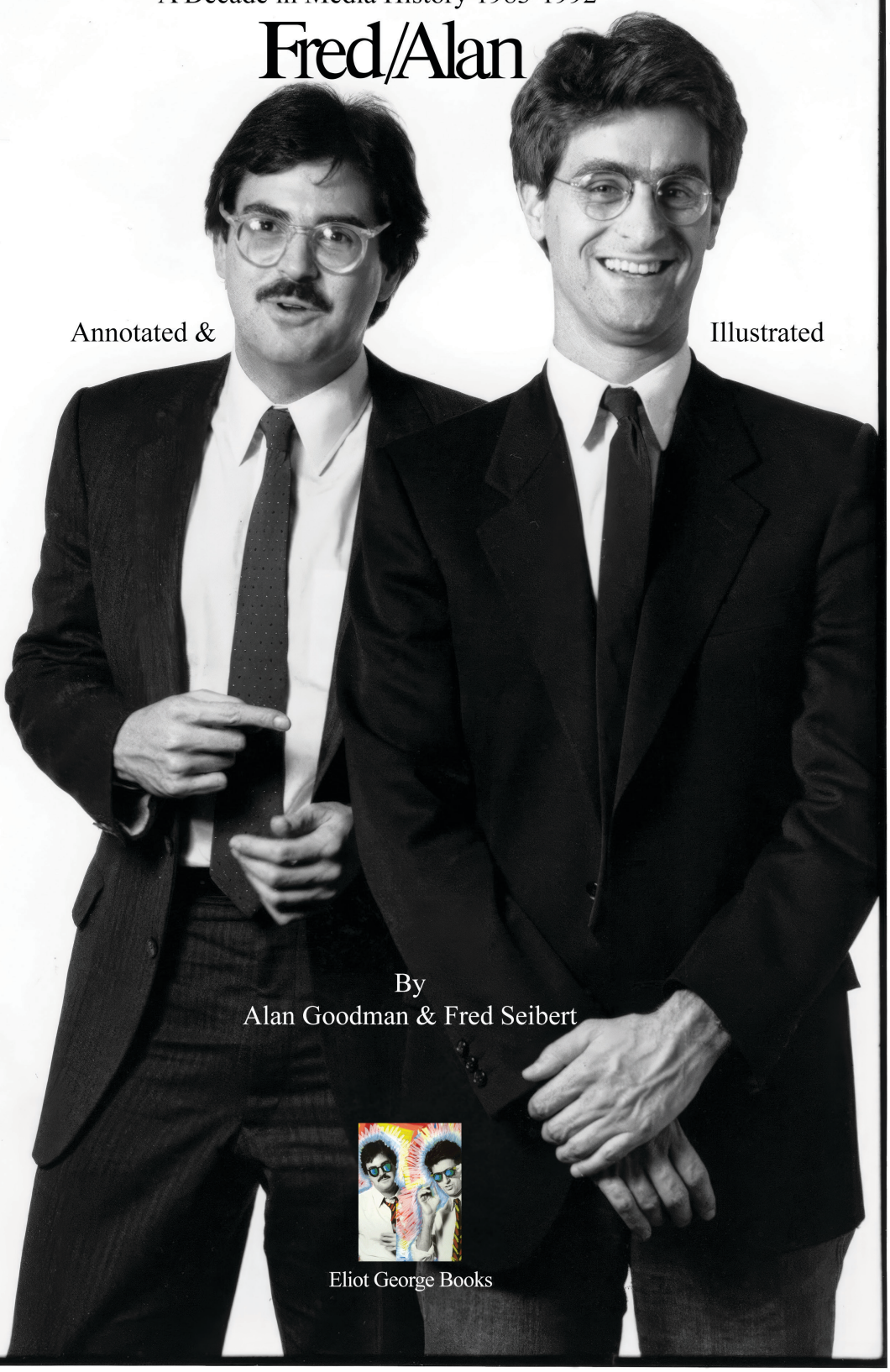
(L-R) Jill Gershon, Troy Ellen Dixon, Jessica Wolf, Bill Burnett, Darth Vader

From Jessica Wolf, February 2025:
No, we did not have a Halloween party.
That last photo was taken in the Fred/Alan lobby
prior to us all going to an MTV party
where you were supposed to dress as your hero.
Paul Simon and Bonnie Raitt played that night
and a waiter died of a heart attack
(coincidental, not causal).
Funny what stays with you...

A Decade in Media History 1983-1992

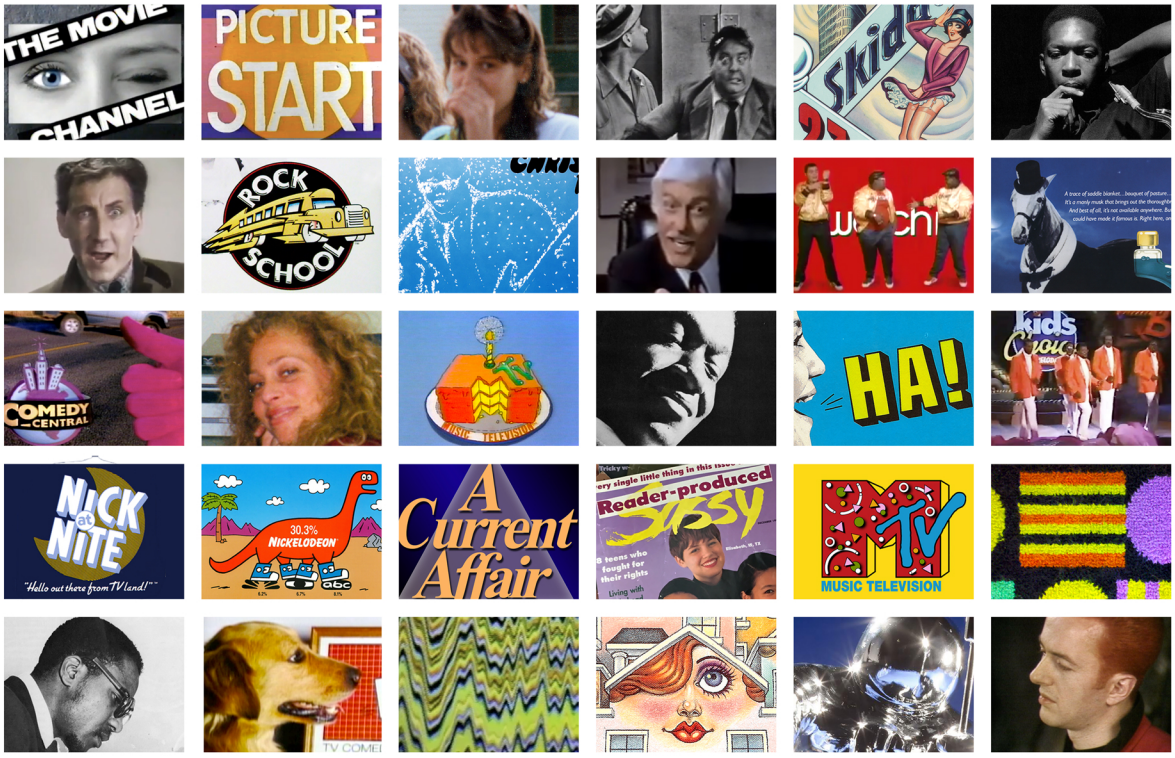
Fred/Alan

Annotated & Illustrated



By
Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert

Eliot George Books

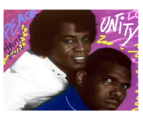


A Decade in Media History 1983-1992

372 Pages
Hundreds of illustrations

Fred/Alan INC.

Annotated & Illustrated

362 pages ©2025, Alan Goodman & Fred Seibert

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